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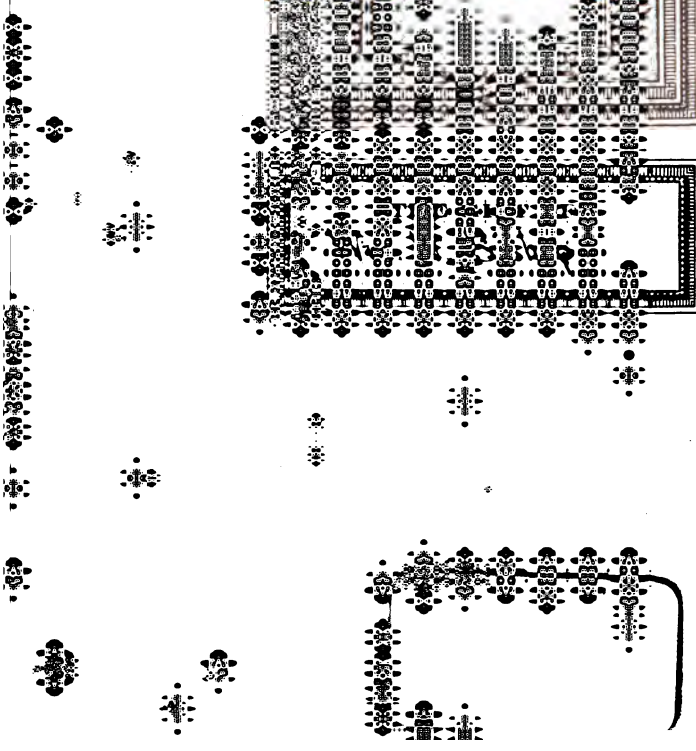
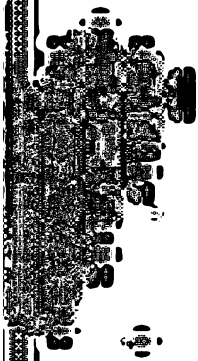
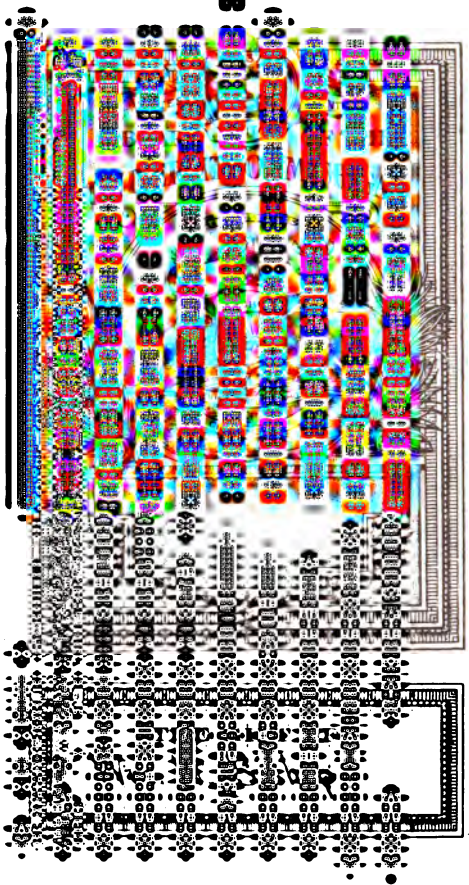
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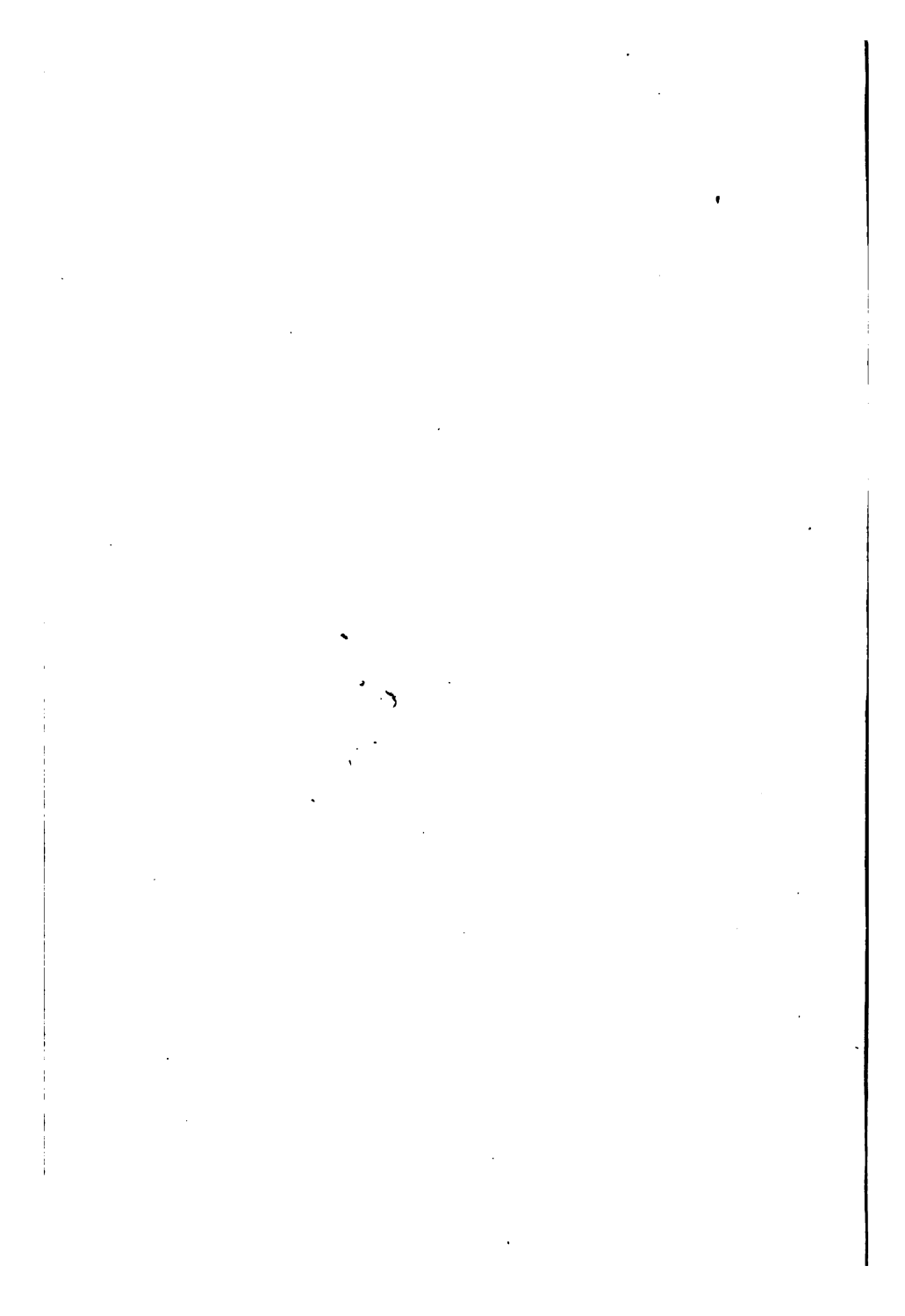
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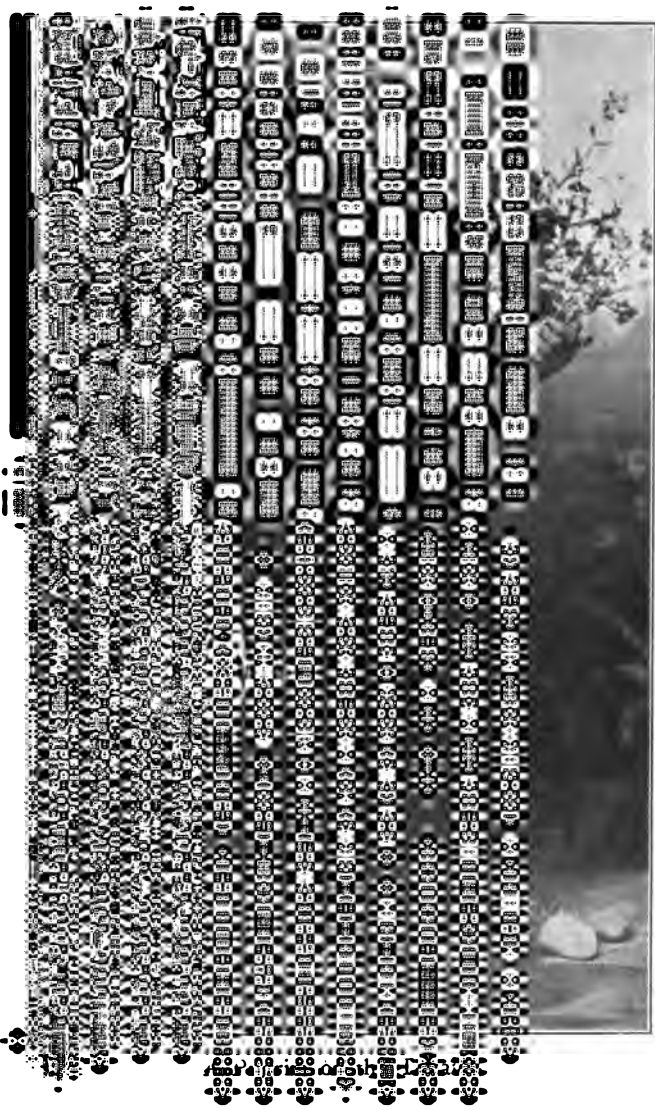




Jewels From the Orient







Jewels From the Orient

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts,
in that day when I make up my jewels."
MALACHI 3:17.

By



LUCY SEAMAN BAINBRIDGE

*Author of "Round the World Letters," "Helping the
Helpless in Lower New York," etc.*

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK

CHICAGO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON

AND

EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1920, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

BV
3150
.B16

Printed in the United States of America

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street

A Personal Word

IN a New England seminary, founded by Mary Lyon, I was a student, and as a senior studied, among other books, Alexander's "Evidences of Christianity" and Butler's "Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion," the Bible being a book in daily use.

In such an atmosphere the girls of that school were interested to learn of Morrison and Carey and Judson and other Christian leaders, pioneers of foreign missions.

It was not strange that many of the young women of that school, after graduation, were ready for foreign service, wherever there were open doors. Neither was it strange that in later years I should plan a world tour of missions, and look in upon schoolmates and relatives who were at work in Japan, China, Burma and India.

With my husband and son I journeyed two years. There were no Cook parties for globe trotters, no luxury of travel in the Orient at that time. There were no palatial hostelries for Europeans as there are now, but we were welcomed into the homes of the missionaries, and given every possible opportunity to understand native customs and super-

stitutions and idolatry. Their work, their difficulties, their joys and disappointments were like an open book.

Such intimate acquaintance with missionary effort of different denominations gave us many and varied experiences. On return to America I used some of these stories in my talks given under the auspices of the Presbyterian Women's Foreign Missionary Society, and later to Baptists and others, and afterwards wrote them out. These simple but real incidents have been gathering the dust until now. I take them from their hiding and select a few which make this little book, with the hope that they may prove helpful. We rejoice over great things accomplished in our Woman's Work for Woman—schools, colleges, hospitals, Christian native women educated and in positions of large influence, but is it not wise to sometimes look back as well as forward? Let us think not only of the splendid outlook in this Jubilee time, but remember the faith and prayer, the difficulties and sacrifices of those missionaries upon whose labours we now build.

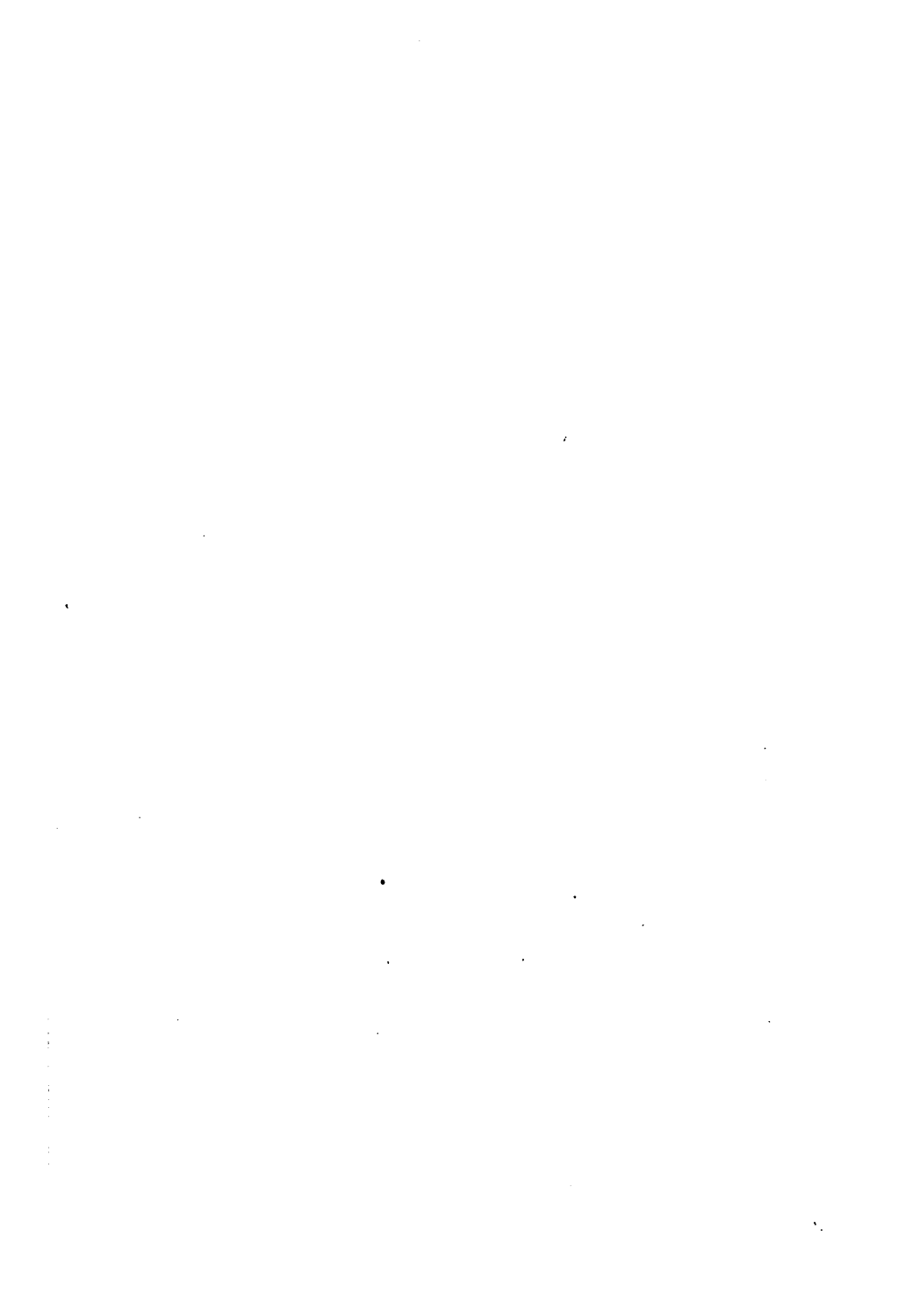
A few years ago I had the privilege of a second tour of the world, and could then see something of the harvest which follows faithful seed sowing. I hope that these incidents from my own experience may prove helpful to those who have not had the privilege which was given to us, of personal visitation of the Orient. I realize afresh that only the

Gospel of Jesus Christ can conquer demons, and superstitions, and false religions and customs which degrade and destroy.

Although customs and costumes, language and life are so widely different in the Orient from our own, we may feel confident that the Bible is the one book for all tongues and all peoples. There is one God over all, unto whose Son, the Lord, Jesus Christ, has been given all power in Heaven and on earth, *therefore* are we commanded to go unto all nations with the Gospel, knowing that "He is with us alway, even unto the end of the world."

L. S. B.

New York City.



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(Japan)

I

THE OLD LADY PILGRIM FROM THE
HAKONE MOUNTAIN

A LONG the Tokaido, that broad avenue of three hundred miles, which unites the two capitals of the Empire of the Rising Sun, Tokyo and Kyoto, our little party of three, including the small boy, journeyed by jinrikishas.

Hundreds of pilgrims of all kinds were on a spring journey to some favourite temple or shrine, and under the overhanging trees, chatting in groups they trudged along, up hill and down. They crowded tea houses at noon and filled the inns at nightfall.

Perhaps somebody in their families had been ill, or there was misfortune. The new baby, the aged grandparent, the busy father and weary mother alike needed special help against evil spirits, so one of the household must go on a pilgrimage and make offerings and beseech the idols.

Steadfastly, an old lady, from her home over the mountains, trudged along. She did not stop to gossip in some shady nook or at the gay toy,

shops, or to loiter here and there with old friends. There was no time to lose. The toil and sorrows of threescore years had whitened her hair and put furrows in her cheeks. For a long period in her life, every sixth year, some dire calamity had befallen her little home. Once, it was the death of a son, again it was her own severe illness, and yet again her husband died, and now one of these dark years was almost upon her. What would be its history? An only son remained; she must, if possible, avert any calamity to him. By going on a pilgrimage to the sacred city of Kyoto, and making many prayers and giving money at the holiest shrines, she would appease the anger of the evil spirits. Having arranged her home and business cares and collected a large sum of money, she started on foot along the Tokaido, leaving her son to care for the house and the tea garden during her absence.

On she trudged, praying as she went, and at last reached the sacred city with its thousands of shrines and temples. Long and carefully she sounded the praises of Buddha, and freely gave money.

During these devotions, another pilgrim told her that a cousin living in Osaka was worshipping at a new and strange shrine, where the god had not gone to Nirvana, but was living, and had power over all demons and evil spirits. "That is just what I am after," thought the old woman.

Saying nothing to priest or to devotees around her, she hastened to Osaka, to find her cousin and to learn the place and rites of worship at this strange new shrine. The aged relative was welcomed with true Japanese hospitality. Over their fragrant tea, they chatted together of the journey and of this new god, the ruler of all the demons.

Said the old lady, "I do not understand. You say that this god loves you. Impossible, impossible! The gods do not love. How can it be? Do you tell me that he came from a beautiful paradise to die for us, that he will forgive our sins, that he has power over demons, and that we are not to be animals when we die, but will go to his home, we women? I cannot understand such talk at all!"

So the two women came to the mission-home, where were several young lady missionaries, one of whom had previously instructed the Osaka cousin in the truths of the Gospel. Here they listened to God's revealed Word, questioned, and talked together. Down the furrows of the wrinkled face trickled an occasional tear, as the truth of the love of God dawned upon her mind.

She did not return to Kyoto to finish her pilgrim duties. Doubtless, the chanting priests in those mossy old temples never missed her. But she turned her face homeward, with even a more vigorous step than when she had started forth. No calamity came that year. The neighbours felt

sure that her pilgrimage must have been acceptable to the gods. But when she talked to them of her new doctrine, much to their amazement and incredulity, they said, "Whatever notion it is, the old woman is not so spiteful and ill-tempered as she used to be."

The old lady, some months later, started out again on a pilgrimage, but this time not to the thousand temples of Kyoto. She had tasted of the living water; she had eaten of the bread of life, and her soul thirsted and hungered for more. From that village over the mountains, she walked to far-away Osaka. Again did she talk over the new doctrine with her cousin, and came to the mission house.

At that time, I was there as a guest. On the matted floor she sat, Japanese fashion, listening to every word of the missionary teacher. So eager was she to know more that she planned to remain a fortnight. There I saw her day after day, learning the Commandments, listening while they were explained, and repeating over and over the Sermon on the Mount. As she said "the blesseds" one after another, she touched her hand to her heart, and exclaimed, "So desu Ka!", and with a bright earnest face, murmured, "I shall put that away in here; I shall want it by and by."

And surely she did need them, especially the "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil

against you falsely for my sake," for when the aged pilgrim returned home, persecution burst upon her. Neighbours were afraid the gods would punish the whole village because of her heresy. They did not wish to hear of this new doctrine. The old way was good enough for them. She must bake the cake, and in other ways do her share in the idol festivals. When she would not, they vented their rage upon her and her son. Her tea garden was rooted up, her tidy doorway covered with dirty water, her name held in scorn, her son cut off from his old associates, her house set on fire.

But the aged disciple remembered the words of the good Book—"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." She continued steadfast, true to her Christian faith, and in that superstitious, heathen village in the mountains to-day there is a Christian church.

(Japan)

II

THE YESU HOME

WE were journeying on the Tokaido, without any missionary to interpret for us, and with a very limited vocabulary of Japanese. "When you reach Nagaya, there is a native preacher who speaks good English. Here is a letter to him," said Dr. Green. "He will help you gladly."

My head ached. I was weary from the long jinrikisha ride and I looked forward eagerly to finding the home of a native Christian. Down a side street our men drew us slowly, as we searched for the right house. But Japanese houses all look alike and, finally, we decided to stop at one of the houses and pound on the brass plate which serves as a door-bell.

Promptly, in response to our pounding, the bamboo screen was pushed back by a woman who smiled her welcome. Her teeth were as black as charcoal and her eyebrows shaven off. "Oh," I said, "this cannot be the house of a Christian. This woman has carried out the old heathen custom

of making herself so homely that no other man will fall in love with her!"

As we stood wondering what to do next, a bright intelligent appearing young woman, with no indication of this peculiar heathen custom upon her, came from a house beyond, to greet us. Oh, how fast she talked and how little I really understood of the Japanese! I tried my whole list of words but without result, for I could not make her understand that I wanted to find the home of the preacher. Finally, in the midst of the torrent of English-Japanese words, the intelligent little Japanese woman, with a welcoming gesture, took my hand and invited me into her home. From a small cupboard in the corner, the little lady took a volume, bound in Japanese fashion, and bringing it to me, held it out with the single word "Yesu"—a word which I *did* understand.

As demanded by Japanese etiquette, off came my shoes. In pantomime, I told her of my tired head. Evidently she understood my gesture for she led me at once up a few lacquered steps and brought out the futon (padded quilt), again indicating by her pantomime that she understood I was tired and needed rest. Leaving me for a moment, she slipped quietly away, in her stocking feet, and presently returned with a tiny cup of hot tea. As she handed it to me, with a loving smile, she said: "Yesu, Yesu."

Again she disappeared and came back with a

dried cherry blossom which she dropped into my cup of tea. According to Japanese etiquette, I recognized in this act a very special form of welcome. As my little hostess dropped the cherry blossom into the tea, she said, with a look which meant more than many words: "Yesu." (You are more than welcome for the love of Yesu.)

(Japan)

III

A PRETTY AND STRONG-MINDED WIDOW

HAD you stepped into that mission school room with me that March morning you would have said to the teacher, as I did, "Who is that pretty girl yonder so earnestly studying?" Her costume and manner indicated wealth and refinement. And if you were versed in Japanese customs, you would have noticed, as she turned her head, that her hair was arranged in the style of a widow ready to enter again into matrimony, and you would have been as anxious as I was to hear something of her story.

"Okane Yokita is a widow, and belongs to one of the best families of Japan," said the missionary. "She is an only child, and as by Japanese law the family name must not be lost, the parents, years ago, adopted a boy, who should in due time become her husband. After a married life of a few years, at the age of nineteen, she was left a childless widow and fatherless. The mother of the young widow has been constantly watching for a suitable companion for her daughter, one who would be ready to give up his own family name and take hers. But it has proved a difficult matter to ar-

range. Some new complications have been lately troubling the old mother's heart. Her child, now twenty-one years old, has embraced the new religion, and declares her resolution never to marry a heathen, and though the mother knows full well that she could hold her daughter by the strong cords of Japanese custom to any marriage she arranges, yet the fearless, laughing way in which the young widow asserts her likes and dislikes, really alarms the heathen mother. There has come to our mission of late, as interpreter, a Christian young man of education and refinement. Our young and handsome widow often hears him talk, and occasionally, to her special satisfaction, as is evident, he is at the weekly prayer meeting, which she is frequently permitted to attend."

Thus far the story had progressed, when our conversation was abruptly ended.

Said my missionary friend a few days later, "I am very anxious about the pretty widow. The mother is becoming desperate, and has found, she thinks, the proper man, and I cannot see any way of escape from this heathen marriage. Japanese law is very autocratic in regard to the parental control, especially when the family name is involved."

But Okane Yokita had no idea of submitting in the docile fashion of her ancestors. Confidentially, she told her trouble to her dear friend, the Bible woman, and asked, "Will you not be my go-between? Can you not find me a Christian hus-

A PRETTY AND STRONG-MINDED WIDOW 23

band? Will you not say just a very few words to—Mr. Kamamura?"

Very adroitly the kind friend managed the important commission, carefully sounding the praises of the pretty widow. Of course Mr. Kamamura did not at first seem to care to hear anything on this subject. Of course he rather avoided the bright pupil after this, never even glancing at her except when she was busy over her book, and no one could possibly be looking. Of course his own family name was very dear to him.

Well, one afternoon the pretty widow and the fine new teacher talked together in the little mission parlour, an unheard-of breach of Japanese etiquette, and the door was closed. I cannot tell you what was said, but it was something that made the widow's cheeks very rosy, and she smilingly whispered to me, "I velly, velly happy."

Though the heathen mother was horribly shocked at the idea that her daughter should converse, before the tying of the knot, with the man who was to be her husband, she found Mr. Kamamura so much of a gentleman, and of such good family, that she gave her consent to the marriage with her "strong-minded" daughter.

Not many weeks later, when the cherry blooms were in their fullest glory in old Yeddo, there was a quiet Christian wedding in the mission chapel, and Mr. Kamamura and Mrs. Yokita became Mr. and Mrs. Yokita.

(*Japan*)

IV

SOWOTOME SAN'S STORY

IT was one of the few stormy evenings during my stay in Tokyo. The wind sighed through the japonicas on the side hill back of the house, and tossed the branches of the bamboos wildly about, and bent the banana trees by the side porch, as though it were trying to imitate a late cyclone.

The native schoolgirls had studied their lessons, read Scripture with their teacher, and after a few quiet games, wrapped themselves in their futons upon the matted dormitory floor ready for sleep.

"Sowotome," I said to the Japanese girl who was part pupil and part helper, "this is just the sort of an evening hour for story telling. None will interrupt us, and we shall not disturb any one, and as you can speak such good English, we can visit together over this little fire as cozily as can be. Tell me something about your childhood and of how you worshipped idols."

And this is Sowotome San's story, in her own words, which also illustrates the thoroughness with

which the Japanese are acquiring our English language. So pleased was I with her recital that I asked her to write it.

"When I was a little girl, I was the first child in the family, and my grandmother loved me especially for that reason; indeed, she did more in bringing me up than my mother till I was quite a large girl, when she died. It was her greatest delight to tell me all kinds of old tales about the gods, and to take me to temples with her whenever she went, so that I might grow up to be a pious woman. Generally, in all the families where there are grandmothers, they take it as their work to teach the children the names of their deceased ancestors, and forms of prayers; so it was in my case, I used to go to the godshelf and say these every morning and evening.

"If I had pennies given to me, I was taught to cast part of them into a box at the temple; or if I had candies or any other sweets given to me, I was not allowed to eat them till after they were offered at the godshelf. How anxious grandmother was that I should have an earnest piety! But till I was about eight or nine years old, I did not care to give up part of my pence or cakes; I rather disliked it, though I remember I had some fears of punishment if I was selfish about offering. But after I grew a little older I did all those things gladly, believing that I would get many blessings.

"You can see by this that grandmother wanted

to teach me how to deny myself that I might please the gods. Once, when I had sore eyes, and prayed to a special god, I was taught to say, 'I will not drink tea,' naming the number of days, 'so please give recovery.' Some people would not taste salt for a part of the day, in order that their prayers might be answered. That is considered hard for any one to do, because we Japanese do not eat our meals without some kind of salt taste.

"When I grew old enough to take lessons in writing, I began to pray to the god of knowledge, of which I was a very faithful worshipper. As a little girl I had a great desire to become a good writer. I begged my mother and grandmother to buy me a picture, or Kakemono, of that god; and I remember they got me a very small one, of about a foot long and two inches wide. Oh, how pleased I was with it! I hung it in a little corner of the room, and put a box before it, and every morning I used to offer tea, and if anything was given me I gladly took it to my own godshelf, and prayed that I might improve in writing.

"About seven or eight years ago I had a little brother. Oh, how dearly I did love him! He was taken very ill, and was not expected to live, and I felt very sad and prayed to a god that was considered mighty to cure sickness. I gave up my breakfast and every kind of taste of salt, and tea, for several days to this god. But my brother died! From that time I lost my faith in all the gods and

said there was no such thing as a god to help anybody. That was the last time I worshipped any image. Never since then have I prayed to anything, till I came to know the true God. It is very wonderful! I came here to Sensei (teacher, referring to Miss Kidder, in charge of the Mission) and learned of a Heavenly Father. Next I was baptized and received into the Church, and I try to be faithful to Jesus Christ."

When I again visited Japan the first person I asked to see was my friend, Sowotome San.

Faithfully she had taught and worked in the mission school, until she had been taken very ill. But with all her pain and weakness, and a distressing cough, she said to me, "I am so thankful, so very happy that the religion of Jesus Christ came to Japan and to me."

(China)

V

MRS. WONG-AH-FONG

THE first and last calls I received during my stay in Canton were from Mrs. Wong-ah-fong, a native Christian Bible woman. A more intelligent and attractive face could not probably be found among all the half million Chinese women of that city. Strange as it seems, she was taught to read by her husband, and later became a very earnest student of the Bible. Her greatest hindrance to Christian work was her frail body.

Once, on a country tour with a party of Chinese Christian men, including her husband, who were teaching and preaching of Christ from house to house and village to village, Mrs. Wong-ah-fong, when only half-way on the journey, found herself so weary and ill as to be unable to go farther. What was to be done?

They had not the money to hire chair-bearers for her. Such employment was far beneath these men, even though the burden were a wealthy mandarin. Could they lower themselves to one of the most

menial of the employments of their land? Could they carry a Chinese *woman*?

In the spirit of Him who said, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant," the husband procured a sedan-chair, in which his wife was comfortably seated; then the other men joined him, and so they marched on. To really appreciate this act, one must realize the inferior position of women in this land of darkness.

After this effort at country work something easier was planned. A front room adjoining the chapel was opened where the poorer women, who crowd the markets and carry the pails of sewage to the fields, could be invited in to rest and listen to Christian truth.

Perhaps never before had this busy Bible woman taken the time for such social pleasures as a lunch party, but when she heard that her missionary friend and I were coming to call and see her in her work, immediately an invitation was sent for us to remain, if agreeable, and partake of a simple Chinese lunch.

The four bearers of the two sedan-chairs are in the rear court, waiting for us to take our seats. Walking so great a distance through the curious crowds, along slippery, stony pavements is out of the question for us American women, besides, this is one of Mrs. G.'s regular visiting days to several of her many schools for girls dotted here and there throughout this great city.

The kaleidoscopic street scenes, how they change at every turn! It is impossible by pen or brush to picture them. "Be careful there!" I call out to my bearers, who know not a word of the foreign tongue. "You are going right into that peanut stand! Oh, surely you will knock that god off the shelf at the corner of the street!" There seems to be a dingy idol at every one of these sharp turns. What a quantity of bean curd for sale! Oh, see there is a man right in the street, which is hardly eight feet wide, deliberately trimming his toe-nails. What indescribable smells from that cook shop! That church tower is of the Wesleyan Chapel. Last year there was a clock, but a Chinese child living close by died. The family and neighbours are positive the death was caused by that foreign clock. It brought bad Fung-shway, and lest other children die, it must come down. That gate we have just passed is the limit of one of the wards of the city. The bearers are thrusting us into a very close corner here, to make room for a mandarin, with procession of heralds, and banners, followed by a crowd of ragamuffins. Augh! these piles of filth! That open place is an execution ground, used between times for making a kind of yellow ware, and also for a rope walk. But what a little alley this is, into which we are being wedged!

"This is as far as the chair-bearers will be allowed to come," said Mrs. G. "I have a school for girls in here." On foot we pass through a

narrow court, and enter a dark passageway which leads to the schoolroom.

The sing-song nasal jargon of twenty-five girls studying, at the tops of their voices, as is the native custom, is suddenly hushed.

It is an uninviting place, with rough plaster walls, tile floor, dark beams overhead, and lighted only by small windows high up at one side, through which nothing can be seen. The bamboo seats have no backs, and nearly all the pupils have the torture of bound feet. Poor girls, yet their bright faces are very pretty, and in real girlish fashion they have tucked fresh flowers into the braids of their dark hair.

Only a few of these girls are professed followers of Christ. The larger part are from heathen families. What are they studying?

The Bible and "Peep of Day."

But we must not linger to hear many recitations. If there was time, that one in the corner could repeat, word for word, the New Testament as far as Second Corinthians, and several have memorized the four Gospels.

"Mrs. Wong-ah-fong will think we are not coming," says Mrs. G. "As this native teacher is very capable, I will not give the explanations and examinations of to-day."

Again our chair-bearers take up their loads, and through the smells and noises and trades of the city streets, carry us rapidly to the door of the Bible

woman's room. Men are lounging about the outside, many tired women are resting within. Our native friend is telling the sweet story of old to a little group. Presently a waiter from a neighbouring restaurant enters, bringing upon his shoulder a tray, laden with Chinese delicacies.

The Bible and hymn-book are removed from the one small round table, which, with a few chairs and benches, are the only articles of furniture in the room. Then we four sit down together—the missionary lady, our hostess, her mother and myself. Some men look in at the window and laugh sneeringly. The women stare curiously, and people come and go, but Mrs. Wong-ah-fong and her guests are not at all disturbed, but enjoy their visit exceedingly.

Now, that bill of fare makes one involuntarily clutch her pocketbook, and say, "There is some fraud about these Bible women, whose salaries are reported as only a few dollars a month." Wait!

The Chinese excel in the arts of economy. There is a very nice arrangement about such lunches. Whatever is not eaten, the restaurant keeper will take back, and serve again to some other customer. I assure you that tempting as were all these dishes, and savoury with choicest goose oil, the larger part was returned to the caterer.

Other women and children had dropped in during our lunch. There was a new crowd about the

entrance. Our sedan chairs were announced. Women with unbound feet who carry sewerage to the fields, had left their empty buckets near the door and had come in and dropped down on to the chairs. Some of them were there for the first time. They gazed curiously at our dresses, but were too weary to follow on to the street crowd. Mrs. Wong-ah-fong gave to each a cheery welcome and then turned to say her good-byes to us. Taking my hand and laying it upon her heart, with eyes brimming over with tears, she said to our missionary friend, "Tell my dear sister from the flowery flag land, I shall meet her again," pointing toward the sky. "Tell her we shall all speak with one tongue up there. Tell her that our Heavenly Father's Chinese children, and His American children will all be one family in the many mansions of that house above."

(China)

VI

SPIRIT MONEY

THERE are very few occupations open to woman in China, but one of the principal of them is that of making paper money for the dead. For several years after a man dies he must be well supplied with these symbols of comfort and wealth. In that spirit land, to which he is supposed to have gone, he must have money to use, and hence silver or gilded paper in the form of notes or checks, or twisted into the shape of the solid silver syce, such as are used in trade in China, are made and sold. This is burned at stated times, and while the ashes remain here, the spiritual essence goes up to the spirit land with tenfold value. In the temples, large quantities of paper money are burned and especially at the time of a funeral. The son or heir of a deceased man, after he has offered these symbolic syce to the spirits, who are to accompany the dead, calls out to the soul of his dead relation in very loud tones, "Take the road that leads to the southwest! Take the road that leads to the southwest!"

But then, the deceased ancestor needs more than money in his new life. He must have horses and carriages, sedan chairs and servants, fine clothing and houses; and so these are represented in paper, cut out by the skillful fingers of the women, and burned with various heathen ceremonies.

With the missionary, I called on an aged woman who used to excel in making this paper money. Her patrons came from far and near. But the new doctrine played havoc with her lucrative trade. She tried hard to make her enlightened conscience say it was all right, that she must eat, and that this was an honest way of earning her daily food. If others would buy this paper money there was no harm for her to prepare and sell it so long as she did not believe in it herself. But the conscience became very troublesome, and nothing would pacify it, but to stop off short, and make and sell no more cut paper horses or servants or money for such idolatrous and superstitious purposes. What could she do? The daughter-in-law with whom she lived, gave her no comfort. With a laugh, she would say, "Oh, your God is very hard-hearted to let you starve. The Tauist priests over at the temple are fat and well fed. I will keep to the Chinese doctrine and have rice. If you die of hunger then your foreign God is no good! Chinese religion for Chinamen!"

Under the roof hung an old spinning-wheel. She got that down, and dusted off cobwebs, and

tried to spin cotton into thread and sell to the weavers, and thus earn a little. It would be a very meagre support, but better than none. Certainly her eyes were too dim for embroidery, and her old fingers too tremulous and unaccustomed to use a needle skillfully. It was a bitter struggle for daily food. The customers for paper money came and were disappointed not to find the usual ample supply, and turned away calling her an old fool. But the woman prayed and trusted in her God. Beyond the city limits there was a piece of land which belonged to this Chinese family, but which was utterly unproductive, simply an added burden to their poverty.

After this trial of faith had been going on a few weeks, a man came to their door one day offering a good price for the land, which he had heard the family owned. Did she jump at the chance to sell their hitherto profitless property? No! A Chinese woman with all her degradation and ignorance has too much natural shrewdness for that. The old lady speedily found the missionary and told him. He made necessary inquiries, and learned that the land had very recently been taken into the limits of the foreign city, hence its sudden rise in value, and also that it could be sold for nearly double the sum offered. He secured a purchaser and attended to the whole transaction. When the money was handed the old lady, she replied: "Now you have been my 'go-between,' and so you are

entitled to a percentage on the amount." No! indeed, he wanted no pay for helping a sister who was so faithfully trusting the God whom he too was trying to serve.

Then, said the widowed and heathen daughter-in-law: "This missionary has done this, because you are one of the Jesus Christ people, mother, and I am not, so if he will not take the go-between money, then it belongs to you," and by her insistence the sum was added to the old mother-in-law's share of the property.

The aged Christian is still a member of the Church Militant, comfortably living on the income of that sale of the land.

(China)

VII

THE KITCHEN GOD

THE kitchen god is to be found in every heathen home. No matter what the creed may be, Confucian, Buddhist, Tauist or all combined, the guardian deity of the kitchen must not be neglected. Woe to that household which does not pay him homage! No temple nor idol does this god inhabit; he is simply represented by an ugly paper picture about a foot-and-a-half square, which is pasted on the wall above the kitchen range. Enter any house at early morning, and the family will be lighting incense tapers and kotowing, before this gaily coloured piece of paper. During the first week of every year this picture must come down and be burned, and replaced by a fresh one, which the god is urged to condescend to inhabit for the next twelve months.

Some of the people of North China are very shrewd in their dealings with this important ruler of the kitchen. Just before the time for the burning, they place a dish of half cooked molasses on

the god shelf, believing that he is very fond of it, and will eat until his jaws get so stuck together that he cannot talk, and thus will have great difficulty in making a report of all their year's doings, when he reaches the spirit world. Then, to make him feel kindly as he is leaving, they thoughtfully arrange for his long journey. "A man cannot go far without a horse," they say, so a paper representation of one is placed on the shelf. "A horse is of little good unless he be well cared for," hence a tiny dish of grain, another of water and a few straws for bedding are also put on the god shelf. But on such a long journey, his majesty may find that a horse cannot go all the way, as there may be climbing to do, so a paper ladder is added. When all is ready, the whole contents of the shelf is burned with the god, in the courtyard, the service being accompanied with various ceremonies.

Often a week passes before the new picture is pasted up; meanwhile the family, having no sharp eye upon them, do as they please. But it is not safe to be long without a kitchen god. A child is taken ill, or the pig dies, or the chickens are stolen, or money is lost. It is high time to reinstate the god over the kitchen range!

(China)

VIII

SISTER LOTUS, WITH SPLIT TONGUE

IT was the quarterly communion season at the Swatow Mission, and a large company of native Christians, old and new disciples, inquirers and preachers and Bible women, had come together for a week of religious conference and study. Heavy laden with poverty and oppression, they had come up by boat and on foot to the Kak Chieh suburb of Swatow, for refreshment of soul.

It was the morning for the prayer meeting of the native women, and with one of the missionary ladies at either side, to interpret every word, I sat facing that company of Chinese sisters. What stories of suffering and persecution, of long-endured cruelties and never-ending toil were written upon their sunburnt, wrinkled faces!

Just at my right sat "Treasure", who would not promise to replace the tablet of her dead husband, in her home, and give up praying to the God of the foreigners, so she had been crippled for life by the blows of her heathen brother-in-law. "Pray for

my adopted son, he is all alone in our home. His uncle has no power to beat him. Oh, that he may continue faithful!"

On my left was a Buddhist nun, who had stolen away from her monastic life, and was now honestly inquiring the way of salvation through Christ.

Next her sat the Bible woman who had been pawned by her parents when ten years old to raise twelve dollars, so that the rest of the family might be kept from starvation. Oh, the grinding poverty which many of these women have endured!

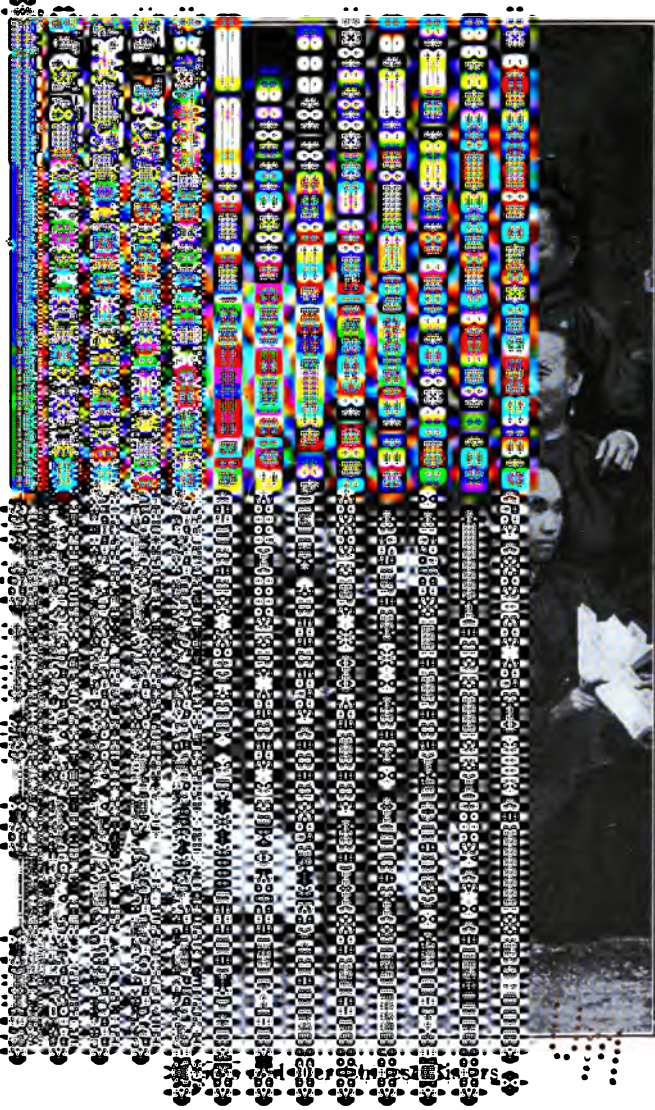
Right before us was Lotus. She had been for many years a demon-worshipper, and had drawn after her several scores of followers. In some of her frenzies she had with bare feet tried to climb a ladder of knives and walk over burning coals, and had slashed and split her tongue, as we could see. While others were asking prayer or giving testimony, this old woman dropped upon her knees and began to pray. Said my interpreter, "Whenever Lotus feels any of the old demon frenzy coming over her, she drives it away by prayer."

That woman on the front seat, Hui Lang or Orchid, was sold when only a few weeks old, by her mother, for two cents. One of the many wandering blind fortune tellers of this land happened to visit her home, and prophesied that this girl baby would bring bad luck to their next older child, a son. As a half dozen girls are of no consequence in China, compared with one boy, she must be got-

ten out of the way immediately; thus she became a member of her future mother-in-law's home before she was three months old. Fortunately for Hui Lang, her mother-in-law had a kindly heart, and together they planted and spun and cooked, and together they listened to the Gospel story, believed, and put away their idols.

The bright-faced woman on the bench behind is Sui or Keepsake, who speaks of her gratitude that in the heavenly mansions even poor Chinese women are to have a place. She comes of a literary family, has known the comforts of a wealthy home during childhood, and also the pains. To make her a lady, her feet were tightly bound when she was seven years old! But her marriage did not prove as expected, and her luxurious childhood was followed by years of very hard toil. Notwithstanding her tiny crippled feet Sui has had to pound rice, feed pigs, carry water, and wash and cook for a family of more than a dozen.

That is Silver Flower now speaking of Abraham's faith. She has been sold three times, first by her mother. The husband, for whom she had been bought, hated her so intensely from the first time that he saw his mother's purchase, that the mother-in-law was forced to get rid of her, so the child-bride was sold to a gambler. After fighting starvation for years, this second husband suggested that as he needed money, he had better sell her and their children to some man who could provide for



4

them. Again she changed owners. This third husband has been kind. Other trials have been many,—poor crops, and the birth of girls who could not be allowed to live, and the death of sons,—but the religion of Jesus had come as a balm for every wound.

It is difficult to close the meeting, there are so many to take part. “Fragrant Love” has prayed her husband into the kingdom and led many other souls to Christ.

Sister Lotus, whose gashed tongue had so long been used in demon worship, closes the meeting with earnest prayer that they all may know the power of the Holy Spirit.

With faces glowing and made beautiful by the love of God, and that “peace which passeth all understanding,” these Chinese women arise, and sing together—they sing in their language, and we in ours:

“What though the tempest rage,
Heaven is my home.
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heaven is my home.
Time’s cold and wintry blast
Soon will be over, past,
I shall reach home at last,
Heaven is my home.”

(China)

IX

FOOT BINDING

IN vain had I tried to gain permission of some bound-footed woman to see her bare feet. When they were wrapped and encased in the little embroidered covering, the women were much pleased at my curious gaze, and extended their tiny shoes with an air of pride, but were very firm in their refusal to allow their naked feet to be seen.

"It is so all over this country," said a friend. "I have lived here many years, and I know how very careful they are never to let their own family, not even those who are similarly deformed, see their maimed feet; but I will ask my amah, and try what I can do for you."

"Oh, no!" replied the native woman. "It will be disgusting. The American lady will despise me; she will laugh! Oh, I cannot!"

"Tell her," I said, "it will only enable me, and perhaps others through me, to sympathize better with her and her poor countrywomen."

At last my pleadings prevailed, but I must stand

at the opposite side of the room as one shoe and the bandage were removed. At first with great embarrassment the foot was hidden under the woman's skirt, but soon I was allowed to approach and examine the deformed and shapeless foot. It was a little bag of dried and seemingly lifeless skin, filled with a pulpy mass of bones and muscles. One of the toes had rotted off during the binding process, and the others, except the large one, had been twisted under and were imbedded in the sole. The instep bones had been crowded up and pushed together, while the heel had been drawn forward, making an indentation nearly an inch deep in the under part of the foot. The limb, to the knee, because of lack of circulation, was only skin and bone, and the ankle, which is usually kept carefully covered with silk wrappings or an embroidered pantallet, was a bulging deformity.

"Oh, how you must have suffered!" I said.

"Yes," replied the amah, "I was not a strong child, and my parents did not dare to bind my feet until I was about ten years old, though wealthy people, such as they were, usually bind their daughter's feet when she is five or six years old. I could not sleep at first with the pain, but finally I would drop off for a few moments at a time by pressing my limbs on the hard edge of the k'ang and letting my feet hang over. All that winter I could not bear even the thinnest blanket over my lower limbs, for they ached least when cold. I could not walk

for months, but pushed about on a chair or was carried by a servant.

"Once when the pain was very severe I loosened the bandage, but my mother told me what a dreadful thing it would be not to become a lady. That same day when a large footed woman came to carry away all the slops and sewerage to the rice fields, mother asked me if I never wanted to wear silk dresses, and if I should like to be a servant.

"Now that I am a Christian I would be so very glad if I could have my feet unbound, but it is too late. I cannot even bear my weight on my feet without the bandages."

Near the house and grounds where we stayed for a little time in China, was a native cemetery. Sitting on the verandah outside of my room, I often heard the mourners, hired and real, moaning and crying at some of the graves. One little sobbing, plaintive voice, coming from that direction, jarred my nerves and touched my heart. "Surely that hired mourner is earning her pay," I said. But one who had learned to distinguish between these many strange sounds replied, "I know that cry too well. Come with me, and I will show you."

On the brick k'ang or bed, in a native home, a little pale-faced girl of about eight years lay moaning because of pain in her crushed feet. It was time for the dressing, and we were permitted, by the payment of a few cash, to remain. The festered feet were placed in a pail of warm water, and the

woman in charge rubbed off the dried skin, then sprinkled powdered alum into the cracks, and worked the foot into the desired form, and all as speedily as possible, for the cloths must again be adjusted, and with ever increasing tightness, before the flesh should swell. The bandage is a strip of muslin, often woven in hand looms for this purpose.

"And how long must this child suffer?" I asked my friend, as we turned away.

"When the foot is dead, as the Chinese say, the pain ceases, but it always takes two years and often several more for the dreadful process."

The poor, as well as the wealthy, desire that one daughter at least, shall become a lady. Hence, if a family cannot afford to cripple all of the girls, because they are needed to help till the fields, they set one aside as the lady.

The Chinese lady with a so-called "golden lily foot", wears a shoe only two-and-a-half inches in length, but she has to be carried by a servant. I saw a few such when entertained in wealthy homes in southern China. It is often accomplished because the flesh sloughs off, and one or more toes rot away. Many times, in such cases, gangrene sets in and the girl dies. A missionary, long resident in China, told me that a few weeks before, he found lying on a country road a young, dying woman, whose feet were nearly rotted off.

Christianity is making inroads upon this terrible

evil. Christian parents do not, as a rule, compel their daughters to submit to this torture. In many mission schools the girls' feet can be restored.

In the populous city of Foochow the native Christians have invented a comfortable shoe for their daughters, whose feet are of natural size,—a shoe something like the tiny ones in shape and finish, but which does not hurt the foot at all. When these girls go about, the heathen say, "Oh, these are not lewd women, they belong to the foreign religion; they wear 'the Christian shoe.'"

(China)

X

TIFFEN WITH MRS. GENERAL PANG

MRS. PANG did not call upon me while I was in Canton. In the first place, her husband was not at home to give her permission to go beyond the high brick wall which surrounded their premises; and secondly, it was the proper thing for me, if I desired the acquaintance, to call first upon Mrs. Pang. My hostess, Mrs. Graves, sent in word that we should be pleased to call upon her ladyship, whereupon a very kind invitation was returned for us to come to an informal tiffen the next day.

The house of General Pang was next door, but there were two ways to reach it, that by the water being the most polite, convenient and inodorous. We had only to stand on the little landing just outside the front gate of the mission yard, and beckon and halloo, and several boat-women, handling their crafts most deftly, would immediately respond, and in an instant land us at our neighbour's water gate. But as the General was down on the coast looking after the defenses, and stopping at one of his other homes, this entrance on the water side was closely

barred and locked. We must then go by the street, and enter Mrs. Pang's home by the small doorway in the high wall at the rear.

Our hostess was a very handsome Chinese woman, of whom one of their classic odes might have been sung:

"Our high dame is of lofty stature,
And wears splendid robes, beneath those of a
darker colour.
Her hands are like a budding and tender plant;
The skin of her face resembles hardened lard.
Her neck is comparable to the white larvæ of
the sphinx;
Her teeth can be equalled to the seeds of the gourd.
The temples of her head are like the cicada;
Her eyebrows to the winged silk moth."

Mrs. Pang was attired in blue satin with flowing sleeves and jacket and skirt profusely ornamented with rich embroidery. Her jewels and filigree head-dress and tiny shoes were equally costly and elegant, the latter being made of white silk covered with delicate vines and buds in raised embroidery.

In woman fashion she took one sweeping comprehensive glance over our entire persons, as she welcomed us, and we could feel her pity and contempt as she seemed to say within herself: "Black silk, no embroidery—no satin raised work, no earrings, such outlandish feet—Bah! And ugly black shoes!"

It was a palatial Chinese home. The high straight-backed chairs of polished wood were ornamented with inlaid pearl and ivory carvings. The chandeliers and candlesticks and the bronze incense urns were of the most expensive kind. In one of the most elaborately carved and gilded apartments were the tablets of the deceased ancestors. These are pieces of wood about a foot high, upon which the names of the dead relatives are inscribed. The soul of a Chinese, according to their belief, is divided at death into three parts, one going to the spirit world, one residing with the body in the grave, and the third becoming the spiritual essence of the wooden tablet bearing his name.

It was evident, judging by the remains of fruit and flowers and smouldering incense sticks, that the General did not forget his filial duties to the Pangs who had preceded him, and that the two little sons of our hostess were being well instructed as to their future responsibilities toward their deceased ancestors.

The table was set for four. Mrs. Pang and her eleven-year-old daughter, who was now, according to the custom of her country, a young lady, sat down with the two guests. The five other wives or concubines and their children lounged about the room, staring with interest at the two Americans.

Our hostess was a real Chinese lady. We knew it by the extreme length of her (not over-clean) finger nails, and the smallness of her feet. These

two facts showed that she had plenty of servants to do all the work.

After hot tea, we were served with bits of dried duck and pickled meat, and bean cake cooked in goose oil, and lotus root with pork preserve, and almond cakes and dried melon seeds and other dishes we did not know what to call, and last nuts and fruits were brought in on quaint trays. Our hostess showed us just what to do with all the shells and refuse. With one sweep of her jewelled fingers, she tossed her share on to the marble floor; and it was evident that this was not simply "company manners" of our aristocratic Chinese lady, for there were already skins and stains and shreds under the carved chairs and quietly reposing in the corners of the room.

"It must be very pleasant to you to have the society of your little daughter, Mrs. Pang," I said, through my interpreting friend. "I think she resembles you very much."

"Yes," replied the mother with an air of pride, "Aeling looks just as I did at her age, but she will not be with me much longer."

"Indeed ——" But my hostess continued without waiting for further reply:

"Your customs are very different from ours, I know. Aeling will be married before she is very much older. It is full time, for she was betrothed five years ago to a merchant down the river, whom General Pang has seen."

"And do you not know him, and has this dear little girl never seen the man with whom she must live all her life?" I asked.

Mrs. Pang smiled at my earnestness, but said, complacently, "Oh, no! We have neither of us seen him; that is not necessary or proper according to Chinese custom. It was all arranged by a go-between. And there is another man who has business with General Pang, who wants this baby girl of mine for his son, but the betrothal money is not yet passed over. We have a lovely garden," continued Mrs. Pang, pointing down through the lattice screen of the verandah, "would you like to walk there?"

In a paved court, bounded on three sides by a dreary brick wall, were three straight rows of large and most valuable Chinese jars, in which were growing dwarfed plants and trees. That was the garden!

"See how very nice," said our hostess, pointing to a dwarf pine trained into the shape of a dog, with glass beads attached for eyes and mouth; "and that, how pretty!"—stopping before a plant twisted and dwarfed to represent a monkey.

But the servant announced that the pipes were ready for the after lunch smoke, and as we were not inclined to accept that part of the hospitality, we bade adieu to this courteous and aristocratic Chinese lady.

(China)

XI

A SHANTUNG SAINT

IN the narrow streets of the city blind men were praying for rain, beating their breasts, and knocking their heads in the dirt. The sun glared fiercely upon the dried refuse and dusty ground. We must get away before the deluge should come, or we might be prisoners for many weeks. The dry beds of the rivers could be easily crossed now, but not when the torrents of weeks of rain should begin to descend.

It was hard to go. Missionaries and native friends had become very dear. There was old Cane Li, who hobbled over a dusty road to say good-bye! This old saint was so named because her tiny bound feet could scarcely support her fleshy body. The only way she could get about at all was by means of a tall staff and a cane. But her place in the church was never vacant. Her sunny smile and cheery voice and hearty greeting showed that her religion was full of joy.

"Yes, indeed," she said, "I thank God you have come over a thousand hills and ten thousand waters to greet me in the Gospel."

"Cane Li," I asked, "will you not pray for me and my little lad when we are far away?"

She shook her head; then, after a moment, replied, "Well, until I hear you and the dear boy are back in the land of the flowery flag, yes, I will, but after that, no, I cannot. It takes me all the time from the firing of the sunset gun to the evening gun to get through with my people here, and I cannot take any more."

Dear old Cane Li! Her promise was well kept, and as we journeyed on over "hills and waters," through dangers seen and unseen, we knew there was daily prayer in our behalf in that little Chinese home in far-away Shantung. She was not satisfied to lump the whole world into one sentence, and the whole mission work into another. No! The wants of each member of that mission were presented daily to her Heavenly Father. Had a missionary and child gone for education in America? That child was never forgotten. Had any of the native church been in special temptation with old superstitions? Were any in sorrow? Were any suffering? Each was prayed for intelligently, individually, and with all her heart.

(China)

XII

ITINERATING BY TOGEOUW AND DONKEYS

"**H**OW far away is Tung-chow-fu?" I asked, before my first meal was finished in the hospitable home of Cousin John Nevius, in Chefoo.

"Fifty miles by togeouw;" and what that means must be experienced before it can be understood.

"But Mrs. Capp will be here to-morrow, or very soon, for she is expecting you, and intends giving you a taste of her itinerating, the kind of work she carries on through all the Spring and Autumn, or whenever the weather is at all suitable."

Not many evenings later there was a jingling of mule bells, and loud scoldings, and noisy jabbering of muleteers just outside our gate, and soon that same restful, earnest-faced friend, who had been so ill in New York, stood with outstretched arms to greet me.

There were all sorts of supplies to be bought for the fifty miles-away-from-a-store-home, and, lest the Summer rains begin, our party must hasten away.

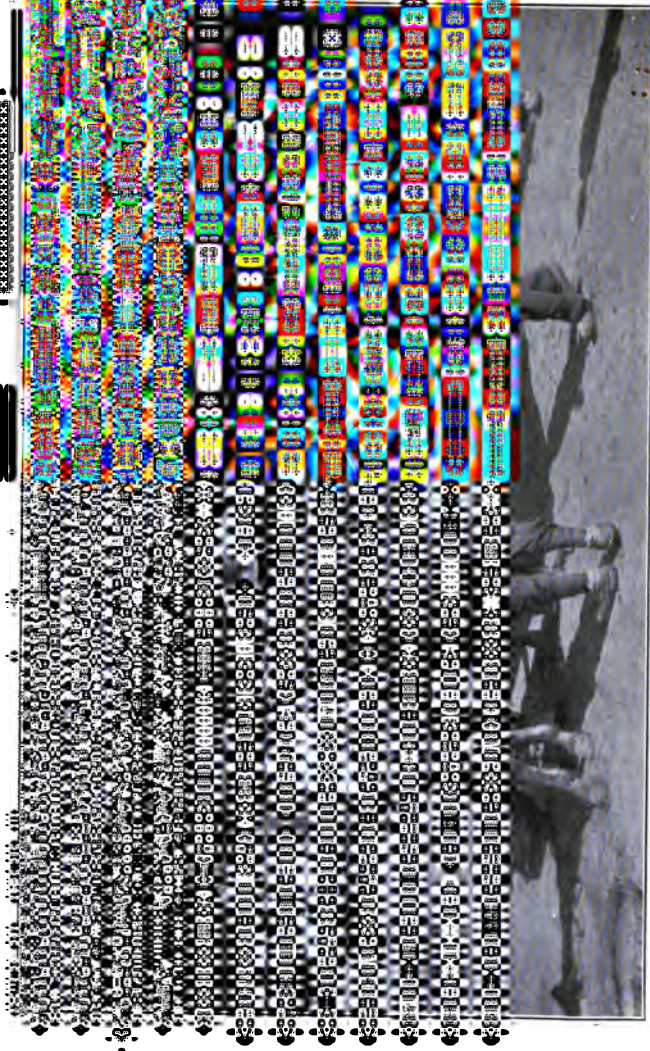
What a bedlam there was just outside the gate that morning! Muleteers were scolding and threatening, making ineffectual efforts to cheat my missionary host, who from more than twenty-five years among them knew all their tricks. The hard board of the togeouw must be made endurable by mattress and pillow; the lunch must not be forgotten; nor the money! Long strings of coppered iron cash on a tow cord, eleven hundred pieces to a dollar, were tossed in, and last I must crawl into the long covered box. The muleteers crack their whips on the backs of the abused animals, the bells jingle-jangle, and several hours after the time agreed upon the procession slowly moves. Mrs. Capp and I are each in a togeouw, and the small boy is on a donkey.

How that togeouw swung and danced and rocked and jerked, up and down and back and forth! The miseries of the Atlantic in a storm were nothing to this. The mules which carried this wheel-less cart, one in front and the other at the rear, seemed to take real satisfaction in their see-saw motion. There are few roads through this country, and mule number one would go up over the ash heaps and piles of stone, and down into the wheelbarrow ruts, and close to the edge of the steep gullies, with obstinate delight, while the mule at the rear was as fully determined every time to take the opposite route. I was kept well churned all the way. The smiling faces of the missionary ladies who had pre-

ceded us, beamed from the doorway of the best suite of rooms at the Chinese inn. We named it "Palace Hotel," for we had a parlour, with one carved table, one chair and a very narrow bench, minus the carving, and a sleeping apartment just large enough for two k'angs, or brick and mortar oven beds, with a narrow space between them. Of smut and cobwebs there were plenty,—the undisturbed accumulations of a score of years. A few layers of dirt and grease were scraped off the table, and with a newspaper for a cloth we prepared for table d'hôte. Our Chinese servant warmed water for tea over some little pieces of charcoal, which exhausted the kitchen accommodations of this hotel. Canned ham, canned jam, and bread from Chefoo was our bill of fare, and while we ate, thirty pairs of curious eyes watched us.

Why did we not shut the door? Those two narrow boards with their wooden peg were the only means of lighting or ventilating our luxurious parlour, and so we chose the curious gaze, the shrugs and comments to unventilated darkness.

Oh, that first night in a Chinese inn! In the courtyard outside there were wailing and sighing mules, and donkeys, jabbering and snoring muleteers. Inside were lively skipping fleas, gymnastic cockroaches and spiders. The guest and her child occupied the double k'ang, Mrs. Capp the narrow one, and the two young ladies shared the top of the carved table. One of them, dreaming perhaps



Travel by Togeouw



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that she was in a menagerie of larger animals than insects, rolled off in the night, but there were no broken bones, and "variety is the spice of life." Morning came at last, and for breakfast we had canned jam, canned ham, warm tea, and bread from Chefoo, a bill of fare somewhat similar to that of the previous evening.

Now for the work! Our Chinese servant had arranged for donkeys. There was the usual effort to squeeze more money. Just so many lies, many loiterings, then we were off. My boy remained at the inn, with the lady doctor, it being the unanimous verdict that the sight of a foreign child, especially a boy, would so delight the curious eyes of Chinese women, that not a word of Gospel truth could be wedged in anywhere.

The clatter of the donkeys' feet on the stony paths outside of the clustered hovels of a Chinese village brought a shining eye to the crack of the gate or door. After a little, some of the more venturesome looked out, asking: "Are you women?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure you are all women?"

"Yes."

"How do we know, when you don't wear earrings?"

Being convinced that none of the masculine sex are with us, they swarm out eagerly to see, to talk and to hear.

"Have you a mother-in-law? How old are

you? How many sons have you? Why did you leave your country; is ours so much better? Are you trying to lay up merit by coming here? Ugh! What big feet! Why don't you bind them? What a queer dress; and why do you make it that way? Have you no bracelets? How is it you wear no earrings? What very strange hair!"—and so on and on clack the curious tongues. But there is a lull, and the story of Jesus is plainly told. Their thoughts for the moment are carried up to the home He is preparing for all who love Him.

"What will become of you when you die?" inquires the missionary.

"Buried, of course," reply a half dozen voices.

"Yes," continues the lady, "the body will be buried, but what of the soul?"

"Who knows? who knows?" the Chinese women exclaim, and then laugh boisterously at their supposed wit. A poor girl suffering with her bound feet, and evidently a victim of consumption, presses toward the missionary, who is sitting on a rough pile of stones by the roadside, and asks some earnest questions. A mother, bereft of her child, asks about this Heaven, but is interrupted by a silly neighbour who comments on our ages and relationship. Our younger missionary, who has not yet conquered enough of the language to talk of Christ, can sing, and she starts a beautiful hymn. The gossip stops, the rude laughter is silenced, and every one listens to the song of "Jesus, mighty to

save." Again Mrs. Capp "tells the old story simply, as to a little child," then the sick are invited to come to the inn the next afternoon to meet the lady doctor who will perhaps be able to relieve them.

As we mount our donkeys, the women hover about, feeling of our dresses, touching our strange hair and hats, and following us to the edge of the village with wistful eyes. Over the treeless country, through fields of millet, under the hot sun we seek another village, and another, one day eleven, another fifteen, another nine, returning every night weary and faint to the inn for the almost impossible rest.

The close of the last day of this itinerating trip had come. Mrs. Capp, upon whom, as leader of the party, the most care necessarily rested, looked worn out. Incessant talking and interpreting, the lack of inviting food and insufficient sleep had been very exhausting. A bright red spot burned on each cheek; eyes and lips were feverish. Supper was over. The younger workers put away the remains of the tinned food, ready for our early start at four o'clock the next morning.

"Is not your day's work done? Where are you going?" I asked, as Mrs. Capp tied on her bonnet.

"Will you come with me?" she replied wearily.

"I cannot rest yet, for perhaps there is some soul in this village who will never hear of Jesus if I neglect this evening's opportunity."

Slowly we sauntered along the dirty, stony streets, until too much exhausted to go further, my friend sat down on a bank by the roadside. A group of women gathered. It was a small meeting in the twilight. The questions and answers were thoughtful and quiet. Seed was sown in seemingly better soil than in many places before. When the harvest of souls is at last gathered, there may be some golden grain from that evening sowing by the roadside of Gongyu.

MEDICAL WORK

Before our tedious ride of the next day to reach the missionary home, at Tung-chow-fu, I must tell of the medical work of this itinerating trip. The carved table served for medicines and bottles and tiny jars. Our lady doctor is ready for patients. Here they come! We should be smothered in this windowless room, if our servant man did not hold the crowding procession back in the courtyard and let the people in by twos and threes. Here is a mother with two children, a boy and a girl.

"Not much matter about the girl," she says, "but can the boy be helped?"

It is easily seen that the girl is by far the most in need of medicine, but the mother will not consent that she be noticed first.

She mutters, and pushes the boy toward the doctor. The examination of both being over: "This medicine is for the girl," says the doctor, "and

this other for the boy; give to him once a day, but the girl needs hers twice a day and a larger dose."

The mother stares in amazement. "What, give a girl the most?" She turns away disgusted.

"That woman," says the older missionary, "will surely change the prescriptions; the boy will have the big dose, you may be sure."

A woman with her prospective daughter-in-law, six years of age, comes in. The child has fits. This other woman says her stomach is full of hot fire. The next poor soul suffers from pain in her head, does not know why, but has been so ever since her two boys died in one week. Here comes a woman who declares there is a worm gnawing inside her tooth. And now it is a case of real leprosy. The boy's foot is a horrid sight, reminding me of the lepers I have seen, with rotted limbs and eaten faces, who ask for alms outside the Jaffa gate of Jerusalem. This boy's father committed suicide, after enduring the disease some nine years. The mother says they have given money, and done all sorts of merit to the evil spirits, and she can't see why they should be so afflicted, and this is her only son. Her pleading that the doctor promise to cure him is pitiful.

Well, here is a woman who claims she knows just what is the matter with herself. She has the "Skin-Ko-tung, or heart mouth hurts," for the cord which ties her stomach to the windpipe has got twisted around her heart.

An aged woman totters in. She is so glad the foreign doctor has come, for now she can be cured right away. She is feeble. Yes, but that is not the special trouble, and points to her eyes. The worst kind of cataract!

Our little friend, the consumptive girl, hobbles in with her crippled feet. She has had too long a walk, and must rest before she can talk. She wants to hear more of that God and His beautiful home, and could the lady give her something for her cough? It is very hard to get any sleep.

Here is a man with his baby boy. The child has an abscess.

Still they come. So many seem to require santonine and oil, that we think we can prescribe—What is it they say? Some sort of a tongue—"dood-za-tung," and then they need the santonine.

But it is time for supper and the crowd is dispersed.

"We had a patient once," says Mrs. Capp, "who had some salve given him to rub on his sore limb, and medicine to take internally, but he either forgot or was tempted by the odoriferous grease, and so ate the salve and rubbed on the medicine."

Poor ignorant people! Little bathing, a whole family sleeping in a small, sealed room all winter, and eating such unwholesome food, what can we expect of their physical condition!

(China)

XIII

SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

HERE was the home of my missionary friends! The high stone wall shut off the dirty street, and shut in a small front yard with grass and a rose-bush—an oasis in the Sahara-like city. The rough stones of this region are utilized for house building, so the cottage with its piazza and open doorway, showing cases of books, looked very inviting.

“So good to be at home again!” said my hostess. “You can realize now how we missionaries enjoy our homes after the itinerating trips.”

A group of the girls were eagerly waiting on the porch to welcome their teacher, Mrs. Capp,—their best earthly friend.

“Are you too weary now to be introduced?” she asked. “They are very anxious to greet you.”

“This one,” said Mrs. Capp, beginning with a thoughtful, intelligent girl, “is one of my brightest scholars, Sa-ti. She is fully equal mentally to any of the pupils in the boys’ school.”

While I held Sa-ti’s hand, my hostess continued,

"Her father tried to betroth her to a heathen, but she rebelled, had her own way, and came back to school. She is engaged to an educated Christian young man. There is no such thing as courting in China, but in this case there has been the interchange of letters—a great innovation upon Chinese custom, and it is as nearly a love match as can be found among this people."

"Here are Lai-ling and Lit-zu, who are very industrious scholars. And this is Lee-za, poor child! Her father has betrothed her, and she knows that she must submit to a heathen mother-in-law."

"I want you to know my faithful I-da. She lives in a little house of one room at the rear of our grounds near the school. Her husband is a teacher in the boys' school. I-da was one of the strong-minded girls, and would not accept the man her brother chose for her, although the betrothal money had been paid. She would not marry this heathen man, whom she heard was also a hard drinker and a gambler."

"This is Mah-le, my sweet singer," said Mrs. Capp as she spied another girl waiting at the back—"han-yo-e-guh." Supposing that this foreign expression was the girl's name, I said, taking her hand, "I am very glad to meet you, Miss Han-yo-e-guh." How the eyes danced with fun! But the girls were too well mannered to laugh at the mistake, although they had their own sport

afterward. That scholar was dubbed by the new name the rest of the term—"Han-yo-e-guh," which means "Oh, here's still another one."

The wheels of school and family life shall move on as nearly as possible in their usual track, notwithstanding your presence, was the promise made to me, and save for the bits of talk here and there, less letter writing, and the putting aside of a few duties, the promise of the missionary was well kept.

Although the words were unintelligible, we could, in spirit, join in the Chinese prayers at the school, and hear the classes recite from the Bible and "Child's Book of the Soul," and listen to the astronomy as well as the algebra lesson, where Sa-ti showed her pride that though "only a girl" she could really excel.

(*China*)

XIV

OLD MRS. YŪ

“ONLY a woman!” A Chinese woman with bandaged feet and wrinkled face, bound by superstitions, yet old Mrs. YŪ is far from being of little consequence in the large community in which she lives.

The village, named YŪ from her family, had not suffered, as had others, by the terrible famine of Northern China. No penny paper gave the horrid details of suffering in the stricken portions of this and the adjoining provinces, yet by word of mouth the news had travelled among the people. They were told of the dying and dead on the roadside, because of hunger, and of the wonderful kindness of a foreigner, who had brought food and who was freely distributing it day after day to more than thirty villages. After this famine was over, and the fruitful harvests were brightening the land, this work of a stranger was not forgotten. It was the subject of talk in many village homes. “What could have been his object?” “Surely he made no money by it, but gave much!” “Was it to

gain merit, like their Buddhism?" "Certainly he made no effort to force the starving ones to become his disciples!" "His doctrine, whatever it may be, has done good."

Said old Mrs. YŪ with decision, "I think it becomes our family to know more of this foreigner and his teachings, and as it is not proper for me, a woman, to take this journey to find his house, and as you cannot be spared," she said to her husband, "let us send our son and grandson down to the port city to learn about this strange doctrine." The husband meekly consented, and in due time the son and grandson obediently started on this tour of investigation.

We met these messengers of inquiry frequently at the home of Dr. Nevius in Chefoo. They were never absent from the early morning Bible lesson, at six to seven, and studied during the day.

Thus several months passed, and it was time for return to their family, and to the mother, who had sent them.

Old Mrs. YŪ listened thoughtfully and asked many questions, and then with dignity replied: "This is a true and good doctrine. I believe it. As the foreign teacher may not be able to return your visit and explain more to us for some time, we should begin at once to practise what we know of this worship."

Under the lead of this "strong-minded woman," the family assembled every Sunday and listened to

the son or grandson repeating Scripture, reading hymns, and expounding the truth, as it had been taught down at Chefoo. Though the husband took no part, he was willing that the meetings should be held, for "Old Mrs. Yû," he said, "is perfectly competent to manage all such things."

Imagine the surprise of Dr. Nevius when in one of his itinerating trips through the country, he visited this village and found Christian worship. A daughter had learned all that the two men had brought home, and in the spirit of her mother had taught the children.

As might be expected, Satan did not give up his possessions in the Yû family without a struggle. Persecution soon burst forth. The old lady stood firm as a rock. The son and grandson turned away from the religion they had professed. The husband was yet an unbeliever. The priests had missed the usual contributions of the wealthy Yû family, and spared no efforts to win or force them back to their old heathenism.

The daughter was taken very ill. "Ah!" said the priests, "this is because of your new religion. You should give us money for the temple."

Mrs. Yû was immovable as the hills near her home.

Then these Buddhist followers tried other ways to win back the renegade disciples, and began at once upon a serenade siege. With drums, gongs, cymbals, fifes and other instruments of the Chinese

music, they surrounded the YŪ homestead, and for several weeks by relays, continued their din from morning until morning.

The sick girl grew worse, but still the noise continued. The demons must be given a liberal sum before they would stop. The daughter died a happy Christian death. Old Mrs. YŪ was still firm.

A married daughter living in a distant village was taken ill. Said her neighbours tauntingly: "Here is another result of your new religion. The evil spirits are angry!"

Again in the itinerating season the missionary reached the house of Mrs. YŪ. Upon learning of the extreme illness of the married daughter, he hastened on, reaching late at night an inn, from whence he sent asking the husband of the dying woman if he might see his wife.

Mr. Whang, though not a professed believer in Christianity, came at once, and cordially greeted the missionary and was ready to welcome him in the sick-room.

Life was almost ended for Mrs. Whang. She must soon leave husband and children, mother and friends, to try the unknown beyond. Was she ready? Looking up trustingly, she said, "God is love, oh, so good; and heaven is very beautiful."

Old Mrs. YŪ has thus been bereft of her two daughters; her husband refuses to acknowledge himself a follower of Christ; her son is not loyal

to what he professed; crops have failed; because of unbounded hospitalities toward those who from far and near have flocked in to hear and talk of the new religion, the family has become almost impoverished, yet Mrs. Yû stands firm.

No man in the village is willing to lead the weekly service. Is it given up? By no means! Old Mrs. Yû repeats Scripture and catechism, expounds, exhorts and prays. Other women, led by her strong Christian influence, join in this regular worship of the one true God.

(*Burmah*)

XV

VERANDAH SEED SOWING

BETWEEN the bazaar and a winding stream is a large and pleasant compound through which the owner invites the many pedestrians to the river to pass, via a turnstile, and thus save themselves a long journey around. A few feet back and facing this well-trodden pathway stands a quaint brown house with sloping overhanging roof and broad shady verandah. Schoolhouse and chapel and bell-tower are in line farther on. Across the way is a snug native parsonage and boys' dormitory, the space directly in front of the mission home being clear, so that a person sitting in one of the nooks of this hospitable verandah can look over the green fields to where a few palms, like sentinels, may be seen in the distance, and elephants and buffaloes are going to and from the water.

Back and forth through the turnstile pass native men, women and children of every station in life.

Upon the outer edge of the mission porch are

chatties or jars of fresh drinking water, of which all passers-by may freely partake.

The morning has been chilly but the heat of the middle of this January day is really intense. There are many who are ready to stop and rest. The sunny face of the lady of the house bids them very welcome. According to their own etiquette, she asks them where they are going and what is their business, and is so at home in their language, and so jolly in her chatting, that they are irresistibly led into spending considerable time on her verandah.

After passing the salutations of the day, an old man sat down to rest on the verandah. "You believe in one true God? How do you know that He made all things and that He existed from the beginning?" he asked the missionary.

A group of native callers, immediately attracted by the questions, stopped talking to listen.

The "Mama" took out the half-smoked cheroot which the man had tucked into the twist of his hair, and holding it in her hand, asked, "Did you find this? Who made it? From where did it come?"

"Oh, a woman made it," replied several voices.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, indeed! Some woman took the chopped tobacco and powdered wood and rolled them up in the leaf," said the man with a wondering look at the foreigner's ignorance.

"This way?" said the teacher, rolling it between her hands. "You feel sure, do you, that this che-root did not just come of itself?"

Every eye was upon the object lesson. "Now, then, look at the leaf ——" and she pulled a bit off and held it up so that all could see the delicate veins and texture. "Did the woman make this too?"

"Oh, no!" they all said.

"You are sure? Then this, you say, came of itself."

The moment's silence was followed by a hearty laugh. Then the missionary added a few telling words to which every one in the group gave attention, except one excited man, who went his way to the pagoda muttering about Gaudama.

Here is a rich man with his son who is just home from a school near Calcutta. The father is gorgeously attired in fur-lined silk jacket and pink and white silk p'toe festooned around his bare legs above the knees. His feet are also bare. This next couple are of the more ignorant sort; the wife will not allow any notice of herself until her lord has been duly honoured. The stereoscope and views on the table attract him.

Two men who heard the Gospel from the "Mama" on her last trip into the jungle have some questions to ask. What will the hostess do with so many people? She pulls a rope in the corner and a bell rings; the visitors did not notice what she was doing, and now the preacher leaves

his little sanctum across the way and is hastening over to help.

This poorly clad woman has dropped upon a low stool against the wall and is content simply to look around upon the novel scene; but the missionary is determined to draw her into conversation.

"What have you done for your idols this year?" said the "Mama," after asking her about her children and home. "Have you been able to do anything?"

"Do you suppose I'd be a whole year, and not do something for my religion?" replied the ragged woman indignantly. "I have given since the rains two rupees and eight annas."

"Why do you give it?" again asks the missionary. The woman did not know, only it is the custom of her people. The teacher led her carefully to the thought of being a sinner and whether this worship and sacrifice to idols relieved her heart load and satisfied the longings of her soul.

"Does not your heart tell you sometimes you are wrong, and are you not afraid?"

"I am often afraid, afraid if I do not do more I shall be a dog when I die. Oh, I am afraid all the time," said the woman.

Gently her mind was led toward Jesus; the old, old story was entirely new to her. There were pictures illustrating the words for her to look at.

The woman struck her hand upon her breast, ex-

claiming, "Oh, how much that God must have loved us, we ought to love Him."

The preacher, meanwhile, had been faithfully talking with the husband, who was now ready to go. Tucking a little book in the breast of his jacket, which he promised he would read aloud to his wife, the two went down the steps as another group came up.

The room at the left side of the verandah had been fitted up by this practical missionary into a place wholly devoted to the purposes of such callers as these. The walls were covered with bright pictures illustrating the life of Christ from birth to ascension, the life of Moses and of Joseph, and many other Bible scenes.

After taking a cup of cool water, on the verandah, the caller is led to notice the views of America upon the round table near the wide-open door into the picture-room. The bait seldom fails and the callers listen, without knowing it, to a sermon which cannot easily be forgotten.

Here comes a yellow-robed priest. He is ready to enter into an intelligent conversation and goes away with a book which he says he will read.

"But," says one visitor, "you do not know anything about the birth of your God. Gaudama, we know, was born under a tree." Mrs. Ingalls quickly answers, "Well, then the tree was before Gaudama; and who made the tree? The one true great Being who existed from the beginning. He

was before all men—In the beginning God created ——”

While the preacher is busy showing the Bible pictures to these men, the missionary has brought out an idol which she intended sending to some friends in America, but a sudden wind one night blew it over and knocked its head off. “There,” she says, trying to make the head stay on, “do you want to trust something that cannot sit up when the wind blows?”

A young Christian man, standing by, casts significant glances at his heathen wife whom he has brought to call upon the “Mama.”

A magnet is brought out with which this resourceful missionary draws her pocket-knife about the table before the interested group of callers. Next she lays the magnet upon the idol, but the idol will not budge.

“Now,” says the “Mama,” in her bright way, “will you worship this magnet? It has more power than this idol you can all see.”

The man with a heathen wife looked encouraged.

“How long since this Jesus died; when did He first come to this world?” asks one of the callers.

Taking a legal document which one of the party was carrying home, the date was pointed out and explained and that such figures were to be found on all papers in British Burmah.

In a springless cart, which was drawn over a rough road by bullocks, I went with this inde-

fatigable missionary to some of the little centers of Christian work in the country.

Evil spirits had sent cholera and smallpox; evil spirits were doing great damage to crops; evil spirits must be appeased! "I do not believe in them," said some of the listeners, "but is it not well to be on the safe side?"

(British Burmah)

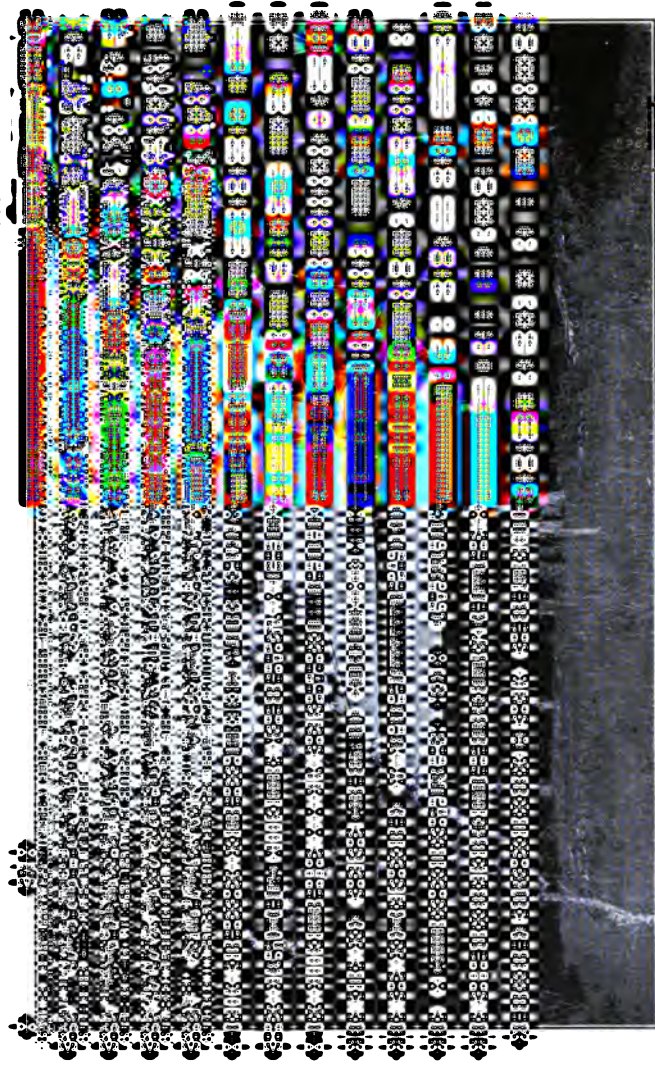
XVI

DIGGING FOR MERIT

A FEW years ago a determined-looking little woman might have been seen day after day, week in and week out, digging in the ground at a spot not far from her jungle village in British Burmah. Deeper and deeper, and wider grew the hole as she persevered, though neither shovel nor pick would this woman use to help herself in the great undertaking. She had set out to dig a well with her own bare hands.

What mattered it if her back ached and her limbs trembled, she was laying up great merit. Perhaps she would escape, thereby, hundreds of years of dreary, dreadful wandering in the spirit world, and of many scores of terrible transmigrations. She was the less likely to be returned to this life as some vile reptile. Ah! she was every day getting nearer the highest possible goal of the ambition of a Buddhist woman, that of some day being a man, the only path to Nigban, blessed dreamless Nigban annihilation.

Deeper and deeper sank the well. A zayat



A Zayat in Burma

11

near by for the refreshment of hot and weary travellers had been built by her generosity. A zayat brings a great deal of merit. Every time a tired Burman man rests under its refreshing shade in that hot country, and every time he drinks of the cool water in the stone jar near the entrance, it brings a large amount of soul merit to the one who has built it. By whom the record is kept, and how much must be gained to enable a woman at her death to escape a terrible transmigration, not even a priest in his holy yellow robe, can tell.

"Our mother is a very pious woman," thought her sons with pride, as they passed the wayside resting-place, or saw the pile of freshly dug earth.

"There is a most worthy disciple of Gaudama," said the Buddhist priest. "She is not forgetful to have ready the freshly cooked rice and ripest fruits for the priesthood, and often she is at worship on the pagoda steps. This woman will escape much misery."

But there came to that zealous woman a lady from far-off America, who told her of another future and another God; instead of Nigban—heaven; instead of the soul wandering in the dark—a Father's house of many mansions; instead of a Gaudama deaf to all human cry, and powerless to help even if he heard—Jesus who ever lives and will save to the uttermost.

It was a strange doctrine! Could she believe it? Was she to give up all her stock of accumulated

merit she had gained by fasts and sacrifices and prayers and zayat, and by well-digging, which was now eight feet deep and six feet wide, and pray to this God? This strange new book said this "God so *loved* the world." This was indeed something new, to have a God who *loved*. With the same earnestness and determination she had shown as a heathen, she gave herself, her all, into the loving service of Jesus Christ.

A little party of us rested one warm day in the shelter of that zayat, and looked down into the well, and then we climbed up the notched pole, the only means of entrance, into the home of that feeble old woman. She had few callers. The sons no longer took pride in their pious mother, and would neither visit her themselves nor allow their children to go. Save for the kind ministry of the little band of native Christians who cared for her when she was sick, and from day to day fed her from their own tables, she was quite alone.

The missionary, who could understand her language, was indeed most welcome. Meantime, I could study this little home of one room. The floor, about six feet from the ground, was loosely constructed of poles of bamboo. Her bed was a Burman mat and ragged coverlid, over which an old mosquito netting hung from the rafters. A small hearth covered with ashes, a few dishes and a stone jar made up the rest of the furnishings.

Said the missionary, "I have told our aged sister

about your coming from my country, and how sorry you are not to be able to talk to her. She wants to have a little service of prayer, and then is going to join us in her favourite hymn." How that old wrinkled face brightened as, in our different languages, we all sang those words, in which she joined most heartily:

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom flee.
Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

(*Burmah*)

XVII

SHE WOULD NOT DANCE

WE were cozily sitting together on the broad verandah of the mission home, well shaded from the hot sun by the thickly thatched sloping roof, when one of the Karen schoolgirls interrupted our chat by a few words, in her language, to her missionary teacher.

"I will return presently," she said, and hastened down the verandah stairs and through the covered passageway which connects the two mission buildings. But she did not speedily return. There was the sound of quiet, earnest words mingled with a girl's sobbing and the stern, angry tones of men's voices. A Karen jargon! What did it all mean?

Some months previous a heathen girl had become a member of this school and had learned to read. She knew a little arithmetic, and still more about that Saviour who had died for her. She had felt the love of her teacher, as she lived this new religion day by day. Now this girl's aged grandmother was very ill and her father and brother had come to take her to their jungle home. To nurse

her aged relative? No. To cook and wash? No. But to go and dance!

That is a queer thing to do for a sick relative! She must dress in her prettiest and gayest style and dance at the p'way, or festival which the family was arranging in the hope of appeasing the evil spirits who had, they believed, thus afflicted the aged relative. Without the dancing the festival would be a failure and the grandmother would die.

"No," begs the girl, "I cannot, I will not dance at the p'way. It is wrong, teacher—tell my father of that One who had power even over devils. He can cure grandmother! I will not dance at the p'way, I will not!"

Threats and angry commands by the father were powerless. The girl clung sobbing to her teacher's knees.

"I will bring you the prettiest silk kerchief in the bazaar. Yes, you may buy a new plaid loong-ye, and string of beads," he said, coaxingly.

The father knew full well the poverty of the child's wardrobe. It was the weakest point for attack. She wavered only an instant. "No, I will not dance to evil spirits!" And fearing that the temptation would be stronger than she could bear, the girl ran away and hid.

It was late in the evening before the father and brother gave up the contest, declaring that they should come on the morrow. The teacher must make the girl go home and dance to the evil spirits.

The aged mother's life was at stake and, if the demons were still more offended, other calamities might follow.

Who can realize the sympathy, anxiety, and the prayer of that teacher? The girl would not go. She did not go. The grandmother did not die. When the next school vacation came the teacher and her pupil, now a member of Christ's flock, together visited that heathen village.

(*Burmah*)

XVIII

KAREN VILLAGE HOMES

DO you know the story of Kothahbyu Memorial Hall at Bassien, Burmah? How it cost thirty thousand dollars, the gift of the Christian Karens of this district for the education of their children, and as a memorial of that first convert from their tribe, Kothahbyu? It is a beautiful structure, and would grace any city in our own land. The sweet bell in the tower had summoned us, along with the groups of bright-faced, intelligent Karen girls and boys, to the school. We had listened in the class-rooms to various recitations which would do credit to even New England boys and girls, had been thrilled by the Gospel singing in the spacious auditorium or general hall of the building, and had watched these same earnest students under the wise leadership of the missionary teachers, sweeping, digging and paddy-husking, just as busy with their hands as at other times with their brains.

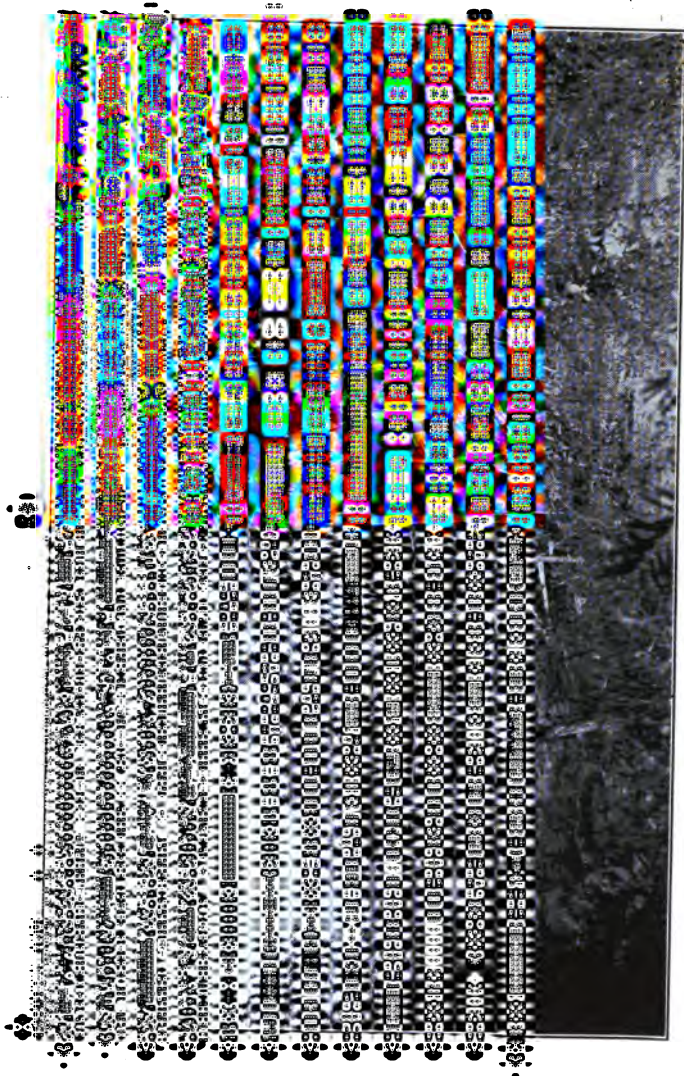
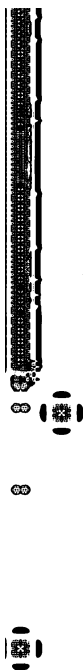
By the kind arrangement of missionaries, we were to visit among the homes of some of these

school children, and to do so we were to go with them by native boat through the winding, twisting creeks of the district, reaching as many of the Christian villages as possible in a few days' time. But it was not all accomplished by boat. No! we had one experience of riding several miles on elephants. Native Christians left their work and came down to the creek at one point with their elephants, so that the teachers and American friends might go up to their village.

It was too swampy for the huge beast to kneel; then how was I to mount? From the little boat deck I must step on a log, and then climb a tree far enough up to step off on to the great head and drop into the howdah. Does your imagination put a scarlet-lined, cushioned affair on that elephant's back, into which one could luxuriously rest and ride?

Instead, I dropped into a rough, saw-horse style of seat, lined with straw or coarse grass, and the great beast swung along with a racking gait. The native driver in front of me, astride of the elephant's head, with his bare toes behind the huge flapping ears, guided the creature. The toes were the reins, and a large Burman knife, or "dah," with which the interloping branches and vines were cleared away, served also as a whip.

The native struck the animal's head with blade or handle as occasion required. Well! the novelty was very pleasant at first, but after the first mile I



Karen Jungle Homes in Burma



began to wonder how far away the village was, and whether one's limbs could ever get so sound asleep they would never wake up, and how much racking one's vertebræ would endure without breaking. However, it might be worse. To reach some of the houses we must needs walk over intervening creeks on a teetering bridge of bamboo poles with only a shaky bamboo for a hand-rail, and again we had no rail, and in order to cross, we must crawl over on hands and knees.

But we are among the homes! There is no cellar or foundation stone to this native house; it rests on posts, five or six feet high, which are set securely in the ground. This elevation is a necessity in this climate, with its long rainy season. The front entrance is that notched pole. This is the pastor's home, and he motions us to climb up. The verandah is the general eating place. In that little room is a sort of brick trough covered with ashes on which a fire is made, and where the rice is cooked, when the rain prevents them from cooking on the ground beyond the house. The roof is thickly thatched, and the sides and partitions are of coarse bamboo mats. There are but two rooms besides this open verandah, but a curtain hung up at night divides the bedrooms. These people are not troubled with drapery, pillow-shams or carpets. Their bed is simply a mat laid on the bamboo floor. The strong odour of the place is from that jar of n'gapee, a condiment made of

rotten fish. It is the favourite sauce for their curry and rice. The clothing of the family can easily hang from the splints stuck into the mat wall. There are dried fish on the wall yonder, and in the corner, near the rice chatties, some dishes. A few books on that low table is the pastor's study. The chickens are cackling under the house, and the pastor's wife urges the teacher to accept a basket of fresh eggs. Do you say such people as these could never raise the money for that beautiful memorial hall? Yes! the whole amount was raised by just such people as these.

In our journey we reach a village, the houses of which are poorer, the bamboo mats need replacing, some of the thatch is very thin. The pastor greets us cordially, and others of this little Christian village of perhaps a dozen houses hasten to welcome the missionaries. We climb the bamboo ladder into the little chapel, and as we turn away to our boats, the deacon takes from the breast of his worn and faded jacket ten silver rupees (five dollars). We had not supposed the village contained so much. The missionary shakes his head, "No! No!" We cannot understand the words. It is a pantomime, the explanation of which we learn later, and it is this: Several years ago the people of this village whose paddy (rice) fields are near by, began to be troubled by rats, which came out of the jungle and ate their crop. The next year the rats increased and ate still more of the rice before it could be gathered.

The villagers tried to poison the rats, but at last they were forced to try trapping and spearing so that they might eat them. At last this enemy had so increased that they must abandon their fields and move away. The village was soon to scatter, whither they hardly knew. They were indeed very poor. "This is our collection for missions," says the Karen deacon holding out the silver. "We wish it were more, our hearts yearn after the wild tribes at the North. We want the Ka-Khyens to learn of Jesus." The missionary meanwhile shakes his head. "No, no, I cannot take it," he says with emotion, "your pastor needs it, he has only rice for a few days longer, you are all very poor, the preacher at the North will be supported. I cannot take this. Give it to the poor of your own church." "No!" was that Karen's reply, "no! teacher, it is the Lord's money, for His work! We can eat rats, but the Ka-Khyens can't live without the Gospel."

(*Burmah*)

XIX

THANONG-YERH-LGHREE

THE rains were holding beyond their usual limit and encroaching upon the dry season. How it poured those first few days of our stay in Maulmain! The flood-gates of the sky seemed to have broken open. Although another such downpour could not be expected for the next half year, it would be weeks before the jungle travel would be practicable for Europeans. Not until the rice-fields, which were now lakes and rivers, were well drained, not until the soil was solid enough for a bullock's cart or the feet of elephants, ought we to go into the country, said the missionaries; but as they were in the habit themselves of meeting such emergencies by roughing it in native boats, why should not we?

Our boat was a long narrow craft thatched over the centre, with just room enough under this shelter for our party, with bedding and baggage; not an inch to spare. The boatmen and the cooking utensils filled almost to overflowing the bow and stern. There was not height enough for one to stand erect,

or width enough to turn around or change seats after once we were packed in. Through rank grass and over the flooded fields our boat was sculled and pushed or allowed to float lazily all that long night, reaching a native Christian hamlet at early daybreak, where we stopped to rest and cook breakfast. The son of the preacher was "the big man" of the village, and in his fine new house we were urged to make ourselves quite at home. The living-room was heaped nearly full of paddy (unhusked rice), which was stored there on account of the unusually damp season.

Drowsy and tired from the cramped riding of the night some of us sat stupidly watching the servant lighting a fire and making coffee for this picnic breakfast. A whiff of the smoking beverage awoke me to the fact that our missionary friend, Miss H., was missing.

"Asleep somewhere?" I asked.

"Not she," replied one of the men, "I left her down at the chapel holding a meeting of native women. If you want to go I will show you the way through the jungle."

"Thanks, but first a cup of this hot coffee, please. I cannot keep my eyes open long enough to get down the ladder of this house and climb another up into the church."

Upon the bare floor of that rude chapel I found her, talking and reading to about thirty women and children. To be sure she looked rather pale and

hungry, but her fatigue did not seem to interfere in the least with her earnestness. Her inspiration for such work was evidently something better than coffee.

On through thicker grass and shallower water our boat was sculled as nearly as possible to the village of Dong-yan, our destination.

"The teachers have come!—our teacher is here!" was shouted from one to another, as the villagers caught sight of the party.

At nightfall that Saturday evening, on the porch of the native chapel, a never-to-be-forgotten picture was photographed upon my memory. The mountain which we had seen in the distance from the steamer's deck as we approached Maulmain, was here close by. Its top bears a marked resemblance to the profile of the Duke of York's upturned face. A pagoda looked like a wart on the nose of His Highness. The cliffs, the luxuriant vegetation, the palm-trees standing out against the gorgeous sunset sky, the quaint thatched houses in the midst of this jungle growth, and then, the coming home of the men and boys, riding elephants and buffaloes, from the rice fields on the higher lands, to keep a Christian Sabbath, made a wonderful picture.

"Hurrah! They have come; my teacher is here, she is here!" All crowd about the chapel entrance, the children around their old friend and teacher.

"Can I go back to school? Do take me. Can I go, and I?" A Christian woman brings her two

sons. "Teacher, please take my children back with you. I'll be lonely, but I want them to learn of the good God." A message comes: one of the old pupils is very ill, and not expected to recover. A heathen woman also, down with fever, wants to see the teacher. We clamber up the notched pole into the wretched home. Two little ones are crying for something to eat. The old granny pokes the cinders on the dirty hearth, for the rice cooks slowly. The sick woman is burning with fever and tosses restlessly upon her hard bed—a mat on the bamboo floor. "The devils have been shaking me," she says, "until I was so cold, and now I am on fire."

Hands, arms and neck are thickly coated with dirt, and her face is daubed with red spittle from the betel leaf she has been chewing. How eagerly her eyes are fixed upon the face of the missionary! "You will help me," she says. "I have tried every way to please the evil spirits, but they are angry. You can help, you will."

In the Dong-yan chapel that Sunday were many meetings. The native women gathered at early morning for special instruction, followed by a children's meeting, and there was a short prayer service before the usual morning worship. About ninety were present at the regular preaching, some of the congregation having walked from five to seven miles from their homes on the opposite side of the mountain. The preacher, Kong-louk, was

attired in a yellow silk p'tsoe, or skirt, looped and bunched about his bare legs, a white jacket and an orange silk turban, which waved jauntily with every gesture. The audience, equally gorgeous, sat on the floor. The corners of the rude chapel were curtained off as sleeping places for us. The wild vines and luxuriant growths creeping in at every crack and opening were the decorations of this jungle temple.

There being no electric-lighted boulevards, or rows of gas lamps along paved streets, and in fact there being no roads at all, nothing but foot-paths through the jungle grass, and utter darkness, with all sorts of venomous creatures to fear, no evening service was appointed in the chapel. The pastor's wife, however, who was too ill to leave her home, invited the teachers and the American friends to join the young folks in a praise meeting at her house in the early twilight. Many of the girls of the village had not had the privileges of the day, for they were obliged to take turns, as is their custom, in watching the paddy fields. There, standing upon some mound or stump and swinging a long switch, they keep off flocks of ravenous rice birds, which otherwise would devour full half of the precious crop.

Again climbing a notched pole, we found ourselves in the native parsonage of that Karen village. In one corner of the main room was a mat bed; a small table and three chairs for the use of the

European guests completed the furnishing. We preferred to give these seats of honour to the gentlemen and take our places on the floor at the side of the room along with the young people. The rafters were well decorated with various agricultural implements, for the preacher was also a thrifty farmer. My seat-mates were his two bright, witty daughters, who had been watching the rice birds a part of the day. Many of the group surrounding the room had some knowledge of English, and Moody and Sankey hymns are seldom sung better than at that Karen praise meeting.

"Now," said the pastor, Kong-louk, "the younger folks have chosen what they enjoy, and I wish you would all sing one of my favourites: 'When I can read my title clear.' It always reminds me of dear old teacher Vinton, whom I am longing to greet once more and forever."

The invalid wife, seated upon a mat and leaning for support against a bamboo post, despite her hard fits of coughing, seemed to enjoy every word that was sung. It was her turn next to select a hymn. "Sing my favourite," she said, "'Oh, think of the home over there'—I am going soon to enjoy it, and see my blessed Saviour. I want to thank my sister for coming to visit us, from far-off America, and I wish she would take a message when she returns, to all the sisters there: tell them I am grateful for the Gospel, and that I should never have known anything about that home or my precious

Saviour if it had not been for the Gospel they sent me."

The praise meeting closed with all singing "Yes, we'll gather at the river."

"Thanong-yerh-lghree," said the pastor's daughters, "thanong-yerh-lghree."

I quickly learned from their faces and tones that it was a sweet good-bye. "'Thanong-yerh-lghree.' 'Do not forget me.' That is what they are all saying to you," interpreted a missionary. A beautiful Karen farewell. Down the ladder and through the dark jungle it echoed back and forth from voice to voice, and heart to heart: "Thanong-yerh-lghree! Thanong-yerh-lghree!"

(India)

XX

AMERICAN DOLLS

AT a time when some of the boxes from America, filled with gaily attired dolls, reached that far-off mission home in India, I was there, and had the privilege of seeing them given away, and indeed, helped in their distribution. It was a very happy task for the missionaries to unpack, sort and arrange the dolls.

The schoolroom is one side of this open portico. The Babu has a large family to support and is glad for the rent money of this otherwise empty porch. The only use he ever has for it is on the occasion of a party or grand worship day. Then the deep alcove facing the entrance becomes a temple for idolatrous services, and the whole court is decorated.

But the children are restless, and the tinkle of their anklets tells how eager they are for the exercises to begin. The mother-in-law has allowed the zenana women to come down into a lower hall, where they crowd behind the grating of the one window overlooking this schoolroom. They may not see with both eyes, for the saree must cover

them, but they can hear with both ears all that goes on.

The examinations seem very satisfactory. The Scripture lessons and hymns have been well learned, but the little pupils are too excited to do themselves justice. Never had the girls handled such dolls as these before. The most faithful scholar receives the prettiest, and thus the distribution goes on until every child has a gift.

Another home, and here the Babu has honoured the occasion by opening one of the lower rooms and allowing the school to be seated there. That is his little daughter, one of the pupils, who is so gorgeously attired in a purple and gold figured saree and yellow and gold underdress. Her ears bend over with their load of earrings. The fringe of gold across her forehead and the brilliant aigrette are lovely jewels, and that nose-ring with its large pearl looks very uncomfortable. She has a child's heart under all her gay trappings and is overjoyed at receiving a doll. See how prettily she bows and touches her hand to her forehead, and hugs her little treasure tightly as she turns away. See the little red mark in the parting of the hair, which many of these girls have? That is the sign of marriage.

Another little one is only seven years of age and has worn the red mark for months. This one nearest will not be allowed to come to school after to-day. She is eleven and has had the marriage

mark several years, and goes now to live with her husband, and must be secluded. If her mother-in-law allows the missionary to come into her zenana her education need not altogether stop. But this early seed sowing, though cut short by the stern mandate of the mother-in-law, will bring forth some results. These girls will be mothers-in-law themselves by and by. They will bring great changes into these zenanas when they have power.

The native teacher, a Christian widow, enveloped in her white saree, stands at the back of the room and whispers to each pupil, as her name is called, "Don't forget your manners."

Here comes Pirobalah,—Dear Bracelet. Her eyes have deep stains under them and the soles of her feet are delicately tinted. These are the arts studied in the zenanas. She is so happy with her gift that she forgets her manners at first, but turns quickly, and touching her hand to lip and forehead, says sweetly, "Namashka."

So absorbed are these little girls with their new dollies that they have forgotten everything else and are hugging and kissing them in perfect delight. The native teacher had not been forgotten in the American box, for there are a book and calico for a dress for her, and books for the few older girls.

To-day we are off promptly to visit some of the out-of-town schools. Our lunch was put up last night, so we are ready for an early start. The railway train moves along at such moderate speed that

we can enjoy the strange India country life. We catch peeps into some of the mud houses, with their long, sloping thatched roofs, and see the women at work. Such as these cannot afford zenana life. There are gardens of marigolds and here and there a luxuriant bignolia vine festooning the native dwelling.

"First to the new house being built for our pundit out here," says the missionary. We are glad of even a creaking, patched-up gharry in the heat.

"Here! These workmen are using mud instead of pounded brick, and violating the terms of our contract! We will not be imposed upon!" American missionary ladies have not been kept in zenanas, as the India workmen soon find out.

"Here is the school!"

"What, in this shed?"

"Yes; step on that log to reach the doorway."

Upon the floor are squatted forty pupils as close as sardines in a box. The pundit must not come within sight of the place but must stay outside, because a lenient mother-in-law allows two married women, aged twelve and thirteen, to attend the school.

The recitations are very prompt notwithstanding the eager, wistful looks at our box of gaily dressed dolls.

The next school is in the court of a Babu's country residence, but though he is ready to open his

porch to the foreign teachers, the thirty females of his own family are barred within their prison-like zenanas, and are neither permitted to come within sound of the teaching or receive visits from the missionary ladies.

There are school matters to be talked over with native helpers and while all are busy I roam about. Not far away is the ruin of a small and ancient temple. The bricks are curiously carved, and enough remains of the old archway and its ornamental work to show what an elaborate building this once was. But a little bird or some passing breeze has at some time carried tiny seeds into the moss and rot of the old temple and there is growing right out of its top a luxuriant tree. As the temple crumbles and breaks apart, the tree increases and flourishes.

Seeds of living truth are being carried into the heart of India and, as those seeds germinate and grow, the old fabric of mighty superstitions is crumbling away.

(*India*)

XXI

AMONG THE ZENANAS

FIRST to the house of a Brahmin! There is no mother-in-law here. This young man left his ancestral home in the country for a position in government employ. Poor and proud may be said of many of these high caste young India-men. The house consists of two rooms and a bit of paved yard shut off by a high wall and gate from one of the lanes of this large city. The little wife greets us most cordially. That wide masonry divan with its matting cover is the family bed and the only sitting place, except a small box. Those shelves of nice-looking English books on history, travel and science seem out of place here, but the husband is an educated man and a good English scholar. Strange to say, he not only wants his bright little wife to learn that language, but hopes she will be able to enjoy his library. This sad-faced girl of about eighteen years standing meekly near the door is an older sister, a widow, hence is the servant. She has scoured the brass eating dishes until they are like mirrors, reflecting every

stray sunbeam which falls into that wee court, where they are placed.

First comes the spelling and reading lesson. The scholar has evidently been industrious since the missionary's visit last week. Then the little Bo is learning to knit a cape for her baby boy, who pulls the book and tangles the bright wools in perfect defiance of his little mother, who is only a child herself, for Bindubashini, "Fragrant Drop," is not yet fourteen years of age and has been married three years. The missionary finds something in her hand-bag that pleases baby and keeps him quiet while knitting is put aside, and a chapter of the Bible is read and explained and followed by a short prayer.

"Not so soon; do not go so soon," pleads the little mother. "Oh, if you could only come oftener. I count the days until it is time for you again, and then I am glad."

The next house is entered from a very narrow alleyway. The offensive smell is from the stagnant water in the untidy court. Often the open drain of the house is in close proximity to the zenana. We cannot sit on the dirty floor and there is only one broken chair which has been cast out of the gentlemen's parlour. The mother-in-law has decided that the women in her zenana shall not read any more. She is willing that they shall learn worsted work but will allow nothing else. The missionary cannot promise to come under that re-

striction, so many are anxious to learn to read, more than she has time or strength to visit. One of the women follows us as we are leaving and whispers, "My lord is willing, and when his mother goes away to visit her son in another city you will come again, will you not? and I will not forget."

The next house is cleaner; the door is wide open, but a servant hears our steps and salaams very politely as we pass around toward the stairway leading to the zenana. The room we wish to reach is the last one on the corridor. Through the partly open doors we can see the women before their little mirrors, touching up their eyebrows, darkening the under lid, and with paint and powder adorning themselves. This is a large family of married sons and their wives and children, but the only women ready to study are the two busiest, the wife of a dissipated son and the widow of another son, who do all the work of the entire household. The lesson quickly begins, for it is a little late. The Babu may come home, and though everything is in readiness for him, the women would not be so disrespectful or strong-minded as to read while he is in the house. The wife of the oldest son looks with disdain upon her studious sisters-in-law. She does not care to read but is quite ready to break the monotony of her narrow life by coming in to watch the lesson and evidently expects to overawe us by her brilliant attire. Her bare arms are ornamented with a dozen armlets and bracelets, she

wears two costly necklaces and a jewelled hair ornament, all around her ears, and a gold band about her body which glistens through her thin drapery. With every movement her silver anklets tinkle and the rings on the toes of her delicately tinted feet jingle like the woman in Mother Goose, who wore—

“Rings on her fingers and bells on her toes.”

Her youngest, a baby about a year old, is dressed only with a necklace of valuable coins, toe-rings and a gold body-band like his mother. The two interested pupils, busy with their lesson, are by far the most attractive women of the whole company. The widow in plain white saree, debarred from even the ornamental coloured edge, such as the others wear, with not a jewel, is the prettiest of them all. Among the elegant bracelets on each of these women's arms, except the widow's, is a narrow band of plain silver, the talisman of a long lived lord. This is never removed from the time of marriage until widowhood.

The lesson goes on, notwithstanding the interruption from those who do not care to learn and yet are unwilling to remain away. One of the words in the reading is glory. The pupil looks at it with sober face but does not speak it. “Glory,” repeats the teacher. “Yes, I know,” replies the pupil, “but I cannot say it. It would be a sin, for it is the name of my dead mother-in-law.” So the

lesson goes on, but whenever this word occurs there is an instant's silence and the sentence is completed without it.

In the next zenana the Babu's oldest son, who is an educated man, has furnished his wife's room with elaborate bedstead, table, mirror and a sofa, but the walls are decked with pictures of gods and goddesses, and the small windows are so high up that there is not the least glimpse of the outside world. Upon a low bed in another room we sit down with a chattering, welcoming group about us. They have much to tell about the party which is to come off to-night. Of course they will not be seen at all, but after the men have eaten and gone downstairs the women will have what is left, then through some of the chinks in the bamboo coverings placed around the upper corridor they will be allowed to take some peeps at the dancing of the Nautch girls and can hear much of the singing. The party is in honour of little Nihrodah, who had just had her ears bored. She will wear the family jewels and sit upon a throne in the front court. There is too much excitement for a lesson to-day, so we go now. The Babu meets us at the outer hall and bows politely, "You American ladies very kind to come my house, but our women not like foreigners, they not care for learning." "But," replies the missionary, "I find many of the Indian ladies very bright and studious and those of your house, who are learning, are getting on nicely.

They will soon be able to read the Bible for themselves."

"The Bible," returned the Babu, in a sneering tone; "our Shastras be good enough. Before English come India, we all happy, our women satisfied, our young men not break caste. Before time no have drunkenness, now come English religion, English rule, English wines, and our young men be bad, bad. In old time our mothers be respected, now our women they learn read, they not want old religion. Very good," he continues with a bitter smile, "I let you come, but every day I have Brahmin priest read Shastras to my house. I hope time come English power and English religion be gone. I not want drunks, I not want new religion in my house."

"This man," says our friend as we turn away, "is feeling very bitterly because his youngest son, a bright, handsome young man educated in the English schools, has been invited into some English houses and learned to drink wine, and from that taste has become very intemperate. It had seemed as though this zenana would be closed to us, but the influence of the eldest son, who is a very intelligent man, keeps it open."

One more visit! This time through the stable yard! We must pick our way among the piles of offal to reach the narrow passage into the women's apartments. The stairs are steep and crumbly. We are late, for the men are eating. Keep back!

We must wait. If our shadows should fall across that food it would all have to be thrown away and the dish scoured, or they would break their caste. I thought when I first came here that they were of the goldsmith class, and I asked the Babu once, but he drew himself up with great pride, saying, "I put my feet on head of that caste." Only one pupil here but she is well worth the labour spent on her. She drinks in every word with eagerness. "What a wonderful God is yours," she says, "that He should love you so, but my Babu tells me to remember that just as your clothes and way of living is for you, and our way for us, so your religion is for you and our religion is for us."

"On our way home," says the missionary, "I must trouble you to wait a moment while I make a short call on a dear little pupil who was not well at my last lesson."

Upon a comfortless bed on the floor she was lying, too weak to rise and greet her teacher. Her cheeks and eyes were brilliant with fever. "I cannot take my lesson to-day," she said wearily, "but please read to me from your book."

The missionary read and told of Him who came to "save unto the uttermost," of the many mansions He was preparing where sickness and sorrow and crying could never enter, and God should wipe away all tears. The sick one listened with intense gaze. She was evidently very ill, and we must not tarry longer. "Please, teacher," she said, as we

started to go, "will you sing the beautiful words you sang at my last lesson?"

Close beside that little fifteen-year-old wife, so soon to pass out forever from her prison-like zenana, sat the missionary and softly sang:

"Art thou weary, art thou languid,
 Art thou sore distressed?
 'Come to Me,' saith One, 'and coming,
 Be at rest.'

Hath He marks to lead me to Him,
 If He be my guide?
 'In His feet and hands are wound-prints
 And His side.'

If I ask Him to receive me,
 Will He say me nay?
 'Not till earth, and not till heaven
 Pass away,'"

(India)

XXII

DINNER WITH A BRAHMIN

OF all the parties or socials I ever attended, that at one of the mission homes in Bombay was among the most enjoyable. It was a very impromptu affair, simply a gathering of native Christians in the afternoon and early evening, who came together to bid us welcome. There was singing of some of the quaint native airs to which had been added Christian words, and the music of an Indian instrument. The talented editor of the native Christian paper read an impromptu poem, and there was conversation concerning the progress of the Master's work among the millions of India.

A former Brahmin, with his extensive knowledge of the complicated Hindu worship, and a converted Parsee, who had for many years been a follower of the Persian Zoroaster and who was well versed in the Zend-Avesta books and ceremonies of the fire worship, were certainly most interesting people with whom to spend a few hours.

Quite a group of intelligent women were present, whose prison walls of the zenana were broken down and the women themselves made free by the Gospel of Christ. They kept all by themselves at the far end of the room, where the small boy seemed specially welcome. We enjoyed a social chat together, through the interpreter, a lady missionary.

High castes and low castes, men and women, Brahmins and foreigners together in the one long room partook of the simple refreshments.

As we separated, the Brahmin editor, a highly educated man who could speak English well, invited us, in behalf of his wife and himself, to dine with them at their home the next day, an invitation we were most glad to accept.

It was a cozy little home with a pretty sitting-room, with a centre table laden with books and papers. On the wall were pictures of Bible scenes, and the window let in the sunlight and looked out on a small garden. The dinner was in native style and prepared wholly by our hostess, who had needed no servant since the little bed had lost its occupant. There was a dead lamb in this flock, a tiny empty chair by this fireside.

"But," said our host with emotion, "when I think of our darling with the angels, and the certainty I have that we shall meet again where death and sorrow can never enter, my heart rejoices in God and is full of gratitude that my wife and I

are permitted to share in this glorious Christianity."

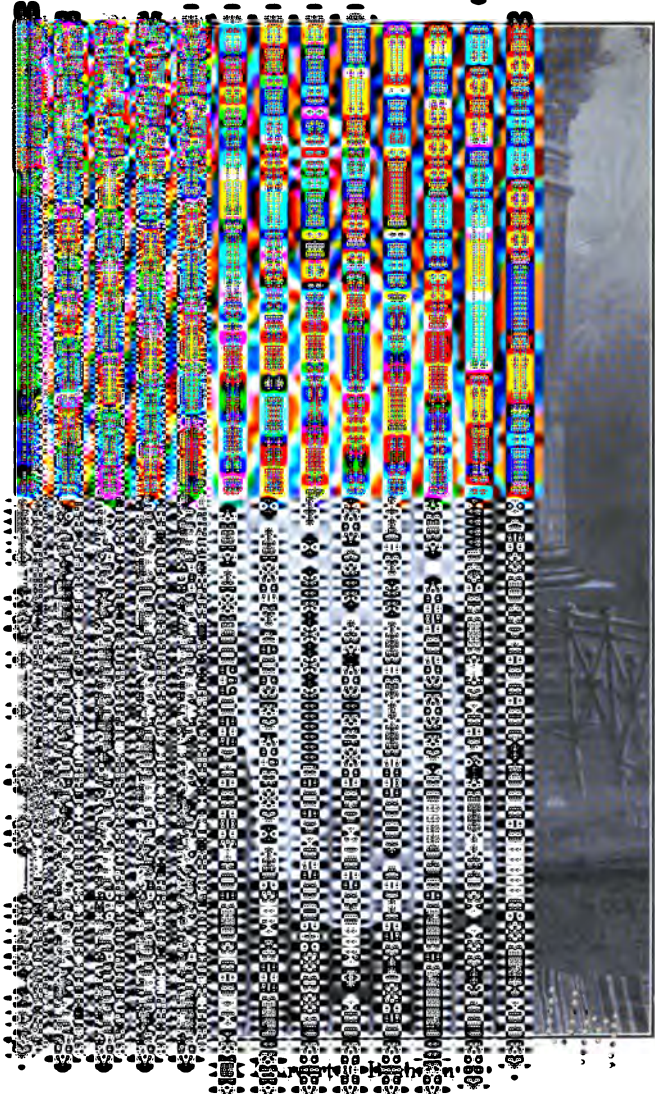
"What was the greatest difficulty you had to overcome in becoming a Christian?" we asked.

"Caste," replied our host promptly. "This terrible caste, which is so rooted into the heart of India, must be destroyed. God can conquer it. I have been a Brahmin god, but I know no caste now. You eat with me, I eat with you—here," holding out the brass plate of rice as he spoke, "I will show you that God has killed all this proud caste in me. Will you take from the same dish with me? Let us eat together."

"How is it with your relatives?" we queried. "Do they now recognize you as one of their own caste? Certainly the high literary position of the Christian paper of which you are the editor must gain you their respect."

"Indeed, no!" he said. "I am as one dead to all my family." And then followed the story of his conversion.

When quite a young man he overheard conversations among his companions which aroused his curiosity to hear the foreign teachers for himself, so one night he stepped into a Christian chapel and stood near the door where he heard a part of a simple Gospel sermon. At another time he stepped just within the doorway and listened to the prayers and hymns of a Christian service. On retiring that night he knelt upon his mat and asked the





God of the Christians to show him what was truth. The next night he was repeating the act when his father burst in upon him: "What is the matter, my son? Do you see a snake? Are you sick?" When assured to the contrary, he groaned aloud. "Can it be that you, the son of a high caste Brahmin, have listened to these foreigners? Promise me," he said, "that you will never do this again. Place your hand on mine and swear that you will not."

Weeks passed. The Brahmin parents were watchful and anxious. Meanwhile the son did not wholly forget the truths he had heard in the chapel. Curiosity and unrest led him back to hear more of the Christian faith. Again he knelt in his room and prayed, determined to find if there was any truth in this eternal God of whom he had heard. Soon after his keen mother noticed that he omitted the usual ceremony of scattering a few drops of water around his bowl of food and blessing various parts of his body. When asked by her why he forgot this important duty, he declared he had not forgotten but did not believe it did any good, and he should never do it any more.

The superstitious mother became very much frightened and begged him not to be so foolish. He would be poisoned or the gods would strike him dead; something terrible would happen. At every meal, day after day, he was entreated to pay this customary respect to the Hindu gods and the only,

way to have any peace was either to submit to his mother's wish or to leave home and live elsewhere. The latter he could very well do, for he was earning his own living.

He was soon sent for by his parents, who begged him to stay with them in the old homestead, even if he would not conform to the customs of his people. The mother meanwhile, in her distress, had consulted a Brahmin priest who told her that her son was evidently bewitched by the foreign teachers, but that he could give her a remedy which would break their enchantment. She must put some of her own spittle and a piece of holy cow's dung into a betel leaf and wrap it up, and induce her son to swallow the prescription without opening. This dose must be taken three times. If he opens the leaf the charm of the medicine will be gone.

"But he will surely look inside the leaf," said the perplexed and anxious mother.

"Very well, then," replied the priest, "there is no way to break this witchery, but if he swallows it as I say, he will be as good a Brahmin as ever."

Of course that mother would not easily abandon the only plan to save her son and with all care she selected and prepared the leaves and their contents. But, just as she had feared, her son was unwilling to swallow the dose without an investigation, and then refused to take it. The coaxing and grief of his disappointed parent was too much for the son's

heart and he finally consented to please her by taking the medicine just as she desired. But, alas, her boy was as much under the foreign spell as before. Indeed, she told the priest, he was every day going more and more to the place of the Christians.

The priest, with a dismal shake of the head, acknowledged that the enchantment was not broken. "They have a tight hold on his heart," he said. "You must try winning him back by the power of affection. You must show him that the Brahmin's love is far greater than the love of one of these Christians."

Returning from chapel service, the young man was met by his father, who threw his arms about his neck in a most affectionate embrace. "Ah! My dear son, you little know how your father loves you," he sobbed, as his tears fell thick and fast.

"Yes," said our host, the editor, choking with the remembrance, "I, in turn, embraced my father and with my head upon his shoulder my own tears fell copiously. 'Father,' I said, 'it is not Christianity that separates us, but the heathenism of the Hindus. I will stay with you and work for you, but you will not let me. You drive me away. I will be a good son to you as long as I live, but I must be a Christian and pray to the Christian's God.'"

"True," said the father to his wife, after the son had gone, "he loves us as much as we love him."

Soon after this, the son, who was willing to leave

father and mother, and home and lands for the Gospel's sake, put on Christ by baptism. When the news reached the parents, they made a last effort to win back their child. A message was sent begging him to return to his home, and assuring him that if he would throw himself at the feet of the Brahmin leaders they would intercede in his behalf, and perhaps it was not too late to have him restored to the honours of the high caste in which he was born. This he refused to do.

A funeral pile was made ready and in effigy the dead body of the son was burned.

The little girl who had been purchased as his wife was now brought to her mother-in-law and declared to be henceforth a widow. The child, according to the Hindu law for all widows, must eat but one meal a day, fast every week, never wear jewels or gay clothing, but spend her life as a humble servant in the inner part of her mother-in-law's house.

The son's name is never mentioned in his father's family, although, of late years, they have been glad to receive a monthly gift from this so-called dead man from whose literary earnings the aged parents are supplied with many comforts in their declining years.

(Syria)

XXIII

A SEEMING IMPOSSIBILITY

IN a miserable native village on grand old Lebanon, a missionary, trying to do all possible for Christ, opened a free evening school. Possibly some one might come who would learn more than the simple Arabic lessons and if but one soul was reached it would be more than sufficient pay for all the effort.

Among the few who came was an old man both blind and deaf. . What an unpromising pupil!

"You must turn him away," said a friend. "He talks and mutters constantly and will interrupt your school, and you surely cannot reach his soul so shut in and locked as it is within his prison body."

"But the child who brought him," replied the teacher, "will perhaps have to stay away also, and how can I send such a poor creature back to his lonely miserable life without at least trying to help him?"

The old man, led by his little bright-eyed grandson, was punctually on time. After the younger

pupils were set to work at their various lessons, the missionary teacher took the old man's hand and slowly marked with her finger upon his open palm, the Arabic character for God. The sense of touch had become very keen now that the eyes and ears were useless. The long forgotten letters came back to the old man's memory.

God—that was enough for the first lesson. He repeated it over and over to himself, tracing the lines again and again upon the wrinkled palm of his hand.

Next time the lesson was—"God so loved:" "God so loved." And the next—"God so loved the world."

The aged scholar had something now for his muttering lips to say. The lessons continued until the whole verse was his—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Later, I met him in the bazaar, this garrulous old man, through whose darkness had penetrated this great truth, and over and over he muttered the one sentence aloud, for all the marketplace to hear.

(India)

XXIV

THE FAMILY TREASURE BOX

IN our many journeyings, it had often happened at the door of mosque or monastery that my husband and even our boy could enter, but I was forbidden, as at the convent of Mar Saba on the rocky Kedron valley of Palestine. The unholy foot of a woman had never defiled the sacred precincts, but in India the tables were turned. A male traveller could by no means ever cross the threshold of one of the zenanas. But in company with one or another of the ladies of the American Doremus Home, I visited the zenana of many an Indian residence.

The gharries or Indian hackney coaches were in waiting to carry us through the hot streets. The day's campaign had been arranged so that the most could be accomplished with the fewest number of these vehicles.

"With whom will you go to-day?" I was asked. "There is no choice," I replied, "but I will go with Miss C. She is the next one off."

"This seems providential," she said as we went

rattling away. "I am going to a dear little pupil about sixteen years old, who has been married several years, but is like a sweet child. I have longed very much to see her alone, to read and pray with her, but lately her mother-in-law seems to distrust me, and either stays close by during my lesson, or sends one of the younger children to act as spy. I am never alone with her. Perhaps your being with me may divert them so that I can have the opportunity I so much desire."

Not at the front entrance of that palatial building did we enter. No, indeed, we had to pass back through a side alley to a small opening near the rear, and through a dirty hall and court where the refuse of the better part of the house had accumulated, then by a narrow stairway to the women's apartments. The elegant rooms opening upon the front court, and street, with their French and Indian luxuries, were for the exclusive use of the lords of the family.

The little Bo or Madam welcomed her teacher with eager face. "How perfectly beautiful she is," I whispered to my friend. Draped in her delicate saree, she was indeed an exquisite picture.

The place for the lesson was always in her own sitting-room, which opened upon the upper corridor of the back court. How that word "sitting-room" suggests an American home with cozy seats and sofa, books and flowers and sewing-basket! But what was there in the sitting-room of this

lovely wife of sweet sixteen? Cement walls, not papered nor ornamented except by a picture of an ugly bloated monster with elephant's head and many hands, a little shelf which held a small hand mirror and a dish of cosmetics and other toilet arrangements, a brick floor with neither rug nor carpet, just a small piece of matting, and a box, was all. The one curtainless window was so near the ceiling that the only view was the end of a roof and a patch of sky above.

The pupil and her little sister-in-law went in search of the one chair of the zenana; the small box answered for a second seat. The little spy, as we called the ten-year-old sister-in-law, squatted on the floor to listen. The mother-in-law peered through the crack of the door at the strange American visitor.

"Ask her, please," I said to the missionary, "if she will not be so kind as to show me some of her Indian jewels. Tell her that if she were to visit my land, as I have hers, she would be curious to see the beautiful things we have in America."

The mother-in-law smiled patronizingly at my request, but there was a great difficulty in the way of its being granted. These family jewels were all in a strong box of which the Babu kept the key. He had gone away for the day. My plan to help the missionary was then useless. A moment later a man's step was heard on the back stairs. Yes, it was the Babu. He had returned for something he

had forgotten, was in no haste, and would be most happy to show the American traveller all the curious and costly ornaments in the family treasure box. As he could speak English the missionary was not needed as interpreter. All the women, except the pupil, followed us along the corridor. To see a lady from a far-off country and to have her admire their jewelry was an event in their monotonous lives. The Babu unlocked the iron-bound box and laid out the several trays. Here were richly gemmed bracelets, and anklets, and toelets, and body bands, and arm bands, necklets, and headlets, and eardrops, and nose-rings, and toe-rings and finger-rings.

"Perhaps the lady would like to see some of our rich Indian goods such as our women use for the saree," said the Babu. "This kind is very costly, the tissue is worked, you see, with threads of purest gold, and this one is ornamented with figures of fine silver."

How I questioned and lingered over the curious jewels, and examined and handled the delicate and costly muslin and golden tissue, as the vision came before me of that sweet faced pupil and her missionary teacher alone together in that back room!

The chests were finally emptied and there was no further excuse for tarrying. At the sound of our approaching footsteps, the little sitting-room door was opened. No need nor opportunity to ask my friend concerning her interview. Their faces

shone with a brightness the world cannot give. They had been with Jesus.

“Yes,” said my friend as we were alone in the gharry, “this was my opportunity. While you were handling the Babu’s jewelry of gold and of precious stones, my dear young pupil was reaching out by faith and receiving, I believe, the pearl of infinite price.”

“Lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.” Rev. 7: 9.

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